



Estate expansion approved despite worries

CONTROVERSIAL plans to extend a housing estate have been approved.

Developers Fletcher Homes Ltd made the proposal to extend its Wat's Meadow estate in Gobowen, near Oswestry, by building a further 12 apartments and eight homes, plus parking for 25 vehicles.

But Selattyn and Gobowen Parish Council said it was "gross over-devel-

opment" of the site. Councillors said: "There is only one access route onto the proposed development, therefore it would lead to an increase in vehicles and site traffic through the existing Wat's Meadow site.

"There is already congestion with cars already parked on pavements and along the road, narrowing access which causes concern particularly in

relation to access for emergency services and refuse lorries."

Residents on the new Hart and Trumpet development nearby also voiced concerns about how close the housing would be to their homes.

But Shropshire Council planning officer Mark Perry said since the original submission, Fletcher Homes had amended the plans to increase the

distance between them. He added: "It is considered that there is a satisfactory amount of separation and would not detrimentally impact upon light or privacy.

"It is considered that the proposed development is of an appropriate design and layout and there would not be any detrimental impact upon the amenities of neighbouring occu-

piers." Mr Perry also noted that the site is landlocked by the railway line and the existing Wat's Meadow estate and cannot be accessed in any other way.

He concluded: "The proposed development will utilise an area of land within the development which is surrounded by existing residential development."

EMERGENCY

Area cordoned off after man sprayed with unknown liquid

A MAN was sprayed with an unknown liquid in Oswestry, prompting an area of the town centre to be cordoned off.

A man in his 30s was attacked on Willow Street near to the entrance of The Meat Man butchers on Thursday last week.

Police officers, an ambulance and a fire crew were all sent to the scene shortly after 9.30am after a woman reported that her partner had been attacked with acid in the incident.

The man was not seriously injured and declined hospital treatment but was treated at the scene for eye irritation.

Officers are investigating what liquid was used in the attack and it is believed to have been a diluted substance and did not pose a significant risk.

A cordon remained in place at the top of Willow Street next to the entrance to The Meat Man and outside Craig Steele Hairdressing until around 10.15am.

West Mercia Police duty inspector Jeff Morris said the attack wasn't as serious as first thought and there was no danger to the wider community.

He said fire officers carried out tests at the scene and the substance wasn't found to be corrosive.

POLICE'S PLEDGE ON DRUG RINGS

Report by Jonny Drury

POLICE have vowed to carry on with their crackdown on drug rings in Oswestry – and are asking the public to help them in their battle.

The vow comes after magistrates agreed to impose a court order on a property in Swan Lane in the town which bans anyone from entering the house for three months.

Police and housing association bosses say the house was being used by a drugs ring.

The house had been raided several times by police in recent months as they targeted the County Lines drug operation. County Lines is an operation where drugs are trafficked into rural areas from cities.

Oswestry inspector Tracy Ryan said the latest crackdown is down to the joined-up work of bosses at Shropshire Towns and Rural Housing and the police.

She said drugs would not be tolerated in Oswestry and encouraged the public to keep supplying police with intelligence.

She said: "This has been down to partnerships with the housing association to clamp down on crime like this.

"We worked very hard on this and took a strong case to the magistrates because of the crime we have dealt with here before. It will not be tolerated and we will continue to work to stamp it out.

"It isn't nice for the neighbours in that area and what I would say is we would like to hear from the public.

"Their intelligence is vital in things like this so it is important they come forward."

Swan Lane has been notorious for drug crime in the past.

The investigation at the property came after a series of complaints about crime in the area, the execution of drug warrants and Class A drugs being found.

Kay's art is among work on show at exhibition



Kay Boyce with some of her artwork at the new exhibition at Oswestry Visitor & Exhibition Centre which features five artists

A COLLECTION of drawings by Kay Boyce, entitled Black and White, is among work on display at a new exhibition in Oswestry.

Work by a total of five artists is on display at Oswestry Visitor & Exhibition Centre in the grounds of St Oswald's Church.

The other artists exhibiting are Hilary Cowley Greer with her figurative ceramics sculptures and drawings, folk artist Annemarie

Lagram, Geoff Armitage's photographic display entitled Just One Colour and work by Richard Mountford.

Richard Mountford's work can be found in collections in the UK, USA, Germany, France, Portugal, Japan and Australia.

Yet the artist, from Glyn Ceiriog near Oswestry, likes nothing more than getting out as often as he can to paint on the streets as a

pavement artist. He said: "I've always drawn and painted and continue to do so from a secluded farm.

"I try to get out as often as I can to paint on the streets as a pavement artist, often working on full sized copies of old master paintings but also working on original pieces.

"I feel that it's really important that people see how paintings are made."

COMMUNITY

Bag containing £400 handed in

A LOST bag was handed into a police station – complete with £400 inside.

A woman lost her handbag in Welshpool town centre on Wednesday last week.

Within hours it was handed into the town's police station.

Sergeant Tom Marshall said: "It was handed into the police station having been found near the Royal Oak.

"It shows that there are some good honest people in the town who hand items like this in.

"Credit to the people of Welshpool."

INSIDE

Legendary Van is still the man



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Stopping births at rural units will be 'huge blow'

Report by Lisa O'Brien

CAMPAIGNERS say permanently stopping women giving birth at Shropshire's rural maternity units will be a "huge blow".

Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust (SaTH) is proposing to extend the suspension of births at units in Bridgnorth, Oswestry and Ludlow until a long-term plan for the county's maternity services is put in place.

SaTH has launched a public engagement exercise to gauge the impact this would have on women and their families.

Under the proposal and long-term plans set out by Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Clinical Commissioning Groups, births may never return to the rural midwife-led units (MLUs).

Tracey Huffer, working nurse and Shropshire Councillor for Ludlow East, said: "Rural mothers around the county have shouted loud that they want to give birth locally."

"Families in rural areas deserve first-class local maternity services."

"We have had that service until just a few years ago."

"SaTH now wants to withdraw midwife-led maternity services from rural areas."

"It will be a huge blow to rural life if mothers are permanently banned from giving birth in our community hospitals."

SaTH says services at the rural MLUs have been temporarily suspended on safety grounds to address the ongoing operational pressures.

It proposes the temporary suspensions continue until a long-term sustainable model of care can be implemented by Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin CCGs.

The trust announced last month that inpatient services at the rural MLUs would remain temporarily suspended for the foreseeable future.

All three units remain open between 8am and 8pm for antenatal and postnatal services. A public consultation will run until August 13.

People can give their views through a questionnaire or discussion groups.

Reception told of music festival's success



Lawrence Mortimer, Rosemary Mortimer, James Barralet, Mary Rolton, Christine Hughes, Michael Limbrey, Caroline Bradley, Jane Stirling and Robert Greaves at the reception

WHITTINGTON Music Festival marked the end of its successful week-long programme of British classical and folk music with a reception at the Sweeney Hall Hotel near Oswestry.

A total of 35 guests representing sponsors, volunteers and members of the festival's Friends Scheme enjoyed a summer evening over wine and canapes. They also heard a 12-minute recording of some of the festival's musical highlights, including a

clip from the foot-stomping folk programming which was a new feature of the six-year-old festival. Festival chairman Robert Greaves thanked everyone for their support, and explained that hopes were high for the future in spite of the competitive nature of Arts Council funding.

Artistic director James Barralet said it was important to get the balance between programming which guaranteed ticket sales and that which offered lesser-known works

which deserved to be heard. Next year's programme, focussing on Czech composers, would provide plenty of good tunes, he said, while in 2020 he hoped to develop the classical-folk mix which had been trialled so successfully this year.

Guests heard that over 115 feedback forms had been received, all of them effusive about May's "Fantasia on a British theme", and a draw from among them won concert-goer Frances Major £50.

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Apartments plan for old court building

A DISUSED magistrates court could be turned into residential apartments if an application is granted planning permission.

Oswestry Courthouse Ltd has put a planning application into Shropshire Council to convert the former court into 10 apartments.

The building is owned by Shropshire Council and the Ministry of Justice, and the application was submitted earlier this month.

The court sat for the final time back in 2011 and was closed as part of Government cuts that saw five criminal and civil courts across the county close.

The court building was originally a high school for boys.

A design and access statement that has been submitted states that there will be no effect on surrounding properties and that a large portion of the site will provide essential amenity spaces and gardens for the property.

The statement also says the building is still in good condition.

The statement says: "The external appearance of the original building is a key factor in its appreciation and significance both locally and within the wider community. While the building is in generally good condition some remedial works will inevitably be required, while other changes may be necessary in compliance with building regulations."

Thousands raised at promise auction

A PROMISE auction held in a village has raised almost £4,000 for a cancer fund.

The event in the Kings Head in Meifod earlier this year raised £3,909.

The promises action was held for the Lingen Davies Cancer Fund.

A presentation was recently held to present the money to area fundraisers.

Planning committee backs schools proposal

Report by Jonny Drury

PLANS to build a new English medium school alongside a new Welsh school in Welshpool have been given the green light by a planning committee.

The super school proposals for two new sites in Welshpool had been given permission but has been hit by problems in recent months as Powys County Council attempts to start the construction.

First the Welsh medium school site was hit when listed status was put on an existing building, causing plans to be changed.

And then it was found work needed to be done on Salop Road to the soil where the English medium school will be built close to the current Welshpool High School.

The Welsh medium high school will be built at the current Ysgol Maesydre site in the town.

Bill

That means the total bill will rise by an extra £3.8 million on top of the £12 million already earmarked. However a decision is yet to be made on the financial side of things. A planning committee has now rubber-stamped the project for approval. The application is for a 360-place English medium school. Part of the extra funds that are required would see £750,000 spent on works to soil, after it was revealed it contains materials and rubble dumped following the demolition of houses in the 1960s.

The report that went before the council states it is believed that asbestos has also been identified.

A condition has been made in the planning report for a full investigation to take place to identify asbestos levels.

The condition says: "Prior to the commencement of development, an investigation and risk assessment, shall be undertaken to assess the nature and extent of any contamination within the application site. The contents of the contamination report shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority."

Pauline embarks on huge tractor trek



Fundraiser Pauline Bennett with Jim Nash from Hallmark Tractors, Derbyshire

MANY do it by bike, others walk, one man recently set out in a bathtub on wheels.

Now Pauline Bennett is doing her own Land's End to John O'Groats challenge by tractor and doing double the distance.

The Tractor Trek will see the 57-year-old NFU Welshpool member take on 2,129 miles for a 15-day charity challenge driving up to Scotland from Mid Wales before turning round and driving all the way to the

tip of Cornwall then driving home. The 57-year-old farms a beef and sheep enterprise with her husband Tom Bennett and their three, grown-up children, Alex, Becky and Will at Tyn y Pant, Manafon, Welshpool.

She is raising money for four deserving charities close to her heart – the British Heart Foundation, Cancer Research UK, Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institute and the Welsh Air Ambulance. Pauline

started on home soil at Welshpool Livestock Market. She said: "Being a farmer's daughter and wife, I have always driven tractors, and with the comfort of modern day tractors, I opted for this mode of transport."

The fundraiser added: "I have been very fortunate to have been sponsored by New Holland who are supplying me with a tractor through Jim Nash at Hallmark Tractors, Derbyshire."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Man's body is found in lake

THE body of a man was found in a lake in the grounds of a Christian centre near Oswestry on Tuesday after a search involving the police helicopter.

Police were called to reports that a man had gone missing.

The search was concentrated in the grounds of the Quinta Hall Christian Conference Centre at Weston Rhyn. The centre has extensive grounds, covering 50 acres and includes a large lake. The body of the man, whose age has not been released, was found at lunchtime.

Police remained on scene into the afternoon and the area surrounding the lake was cordoned off.

Road closed over store joist worries

AN Oswestry town centre road was closed after fears over a structure at a supermarket.

A loose joist on the entrance canopy at Sainsbury's led to the pavement and Black Gate Street below the roof being cordoned off on Friday. Store manager Allistair Moutrie stressed the road closure had simply been a precaution and apologised for the inconvenience. Town centre traffic was affected by the road closure.

Inner Wheel Club holds meeting

THE Inner Wheel Club of Welshpool held its annual general meeting at the Sweeney Hall Hotel.

Ten of the 16 members were present.

Susan Williams, the outgoing president, gave a review of the previous year's activities. She also reported on her sewing kit project, 350 having been completed this year.

Diane Crocker will be the president for 2018/19.

An afternoon tea was held at Belan which raised over £360 for World Child Cancer.

Members were reminded that future meetings are to be held at lunchtime.

The next one will be at the Royal Oak Hotel in Welshpool on Tuesday next week.

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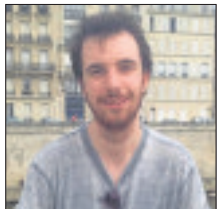
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Michael Powell

Gamer Michael helps out good cause

AN aspiring online gaming star has helped to raise over £500 for a national leukaemia charity by turning his passion into a fundraising opportunity.
Michael Powell, 24, from Gobowen near Oswestry took part in the streaming challenge in aid of

national charity Leukaemia Care. Virtual fundraising is a relatively new concept in the UK but gives another platform for people to fundraise. Gamers such as Michael can raise money from the comfort of their own homes doing something they love to do.

Over the weekend of June 29, Michael and a team of gamers held a number of online gaming events and encouraged those watching to donate to the charity.
Michael said: "I'm so happy to have used one of my passions to have helped raise over £500 for

such a great cause, and I hope we can keep doing this in the future."
Nicole Scully, fundraising manager for Leukaemia Care added: "Online gaming is a new avenue for Leukaemia Care but is already proving popular with gamers. This is a way of engaging with people."

Council to build 250 homes to meet housing need

Report by Jonny Drury

A LOCAL authority will build 250 additional homes in the next five years to meet the needs of residents in Powys.

Powys County Council has made the commitment and identified a number of areas for affordable housing.
The authority is putting together the plans to build between 40 and 50 homes on the site of the former Red Dragon public house in Maesyrhandir in Newtown, after recently purchasing the land for affordable housing.

Inquest opens on motorcyclist

AN inquest has opened on a motorcyclist following a crash in north Shropshire.

Peter Frank Campbell, aged 63, from Llansantffraid near Oswestry, died after his motorcycle was involved in a collision with a car on the A495 between Oswestry and Ellesmere. The crash happened on June 22 at about 1pm near the Narrowboat Inn.

The inquest was opened on Tuesday morning last week in Shirehall in Shrewsbury and adjourned until November 7.

A man and woman in the car involved in the collision suffered minor injuries.

Police are appealing for witnesses to the crash, which involved Mr Campbell's red Honda bike and a blue Citroen C5. It is believed the Citroen had been travelling behind a tractor and a trailer in the opposite direction to Mr Campbell when the crash happened.

It is not clear when the plans will be going in, however the council put on two drop-in events in Newtown this week to share its ideas and views on affordable housing.

The events were arranged so that housing officers can get the views of residents on affordable housing and also establish the housing needs for the area.

Councillor James Evans, cabinet member for housing, said: "We are committed to developing 250 additional homes over the next five years that meet the needs of the local communities across Powys."

"Our Affordable Housing Team is working in communities throughout Powys to identify sites suitable for housing."

"Their work has seen us purchase the Red Dragon pub on Plantation Lane and we intend to build affordable housing on this site."

"These drop-in events are important as they allow us to gather the ideas from residents while we find out what the housing needs are for this area."

Affordable homes have been built in the town in recent years, however they have been built by private developers.

Scholarships joy for pupils



Packwood Haugh students are celebrating an outstanding crop of scholarships

YEAR Eight pupils at Packwood Haugh School near Oswestry have excelled themselves again this year with an outstanding crop of scholarships – no fewer than 30 in total – and a 100 per cent pass rate in Common Entrance with 95 per cent attaining grades A to C.

It means every pupil will move on to their first choice senior school.

Packwood headmaster Clive Smith-Langridge, said: "The number of scholarships has been steadily building since the autumn term as exams and assessments took place

at different times over the course of the academic year. As ever, the awards come in an impressive spread of disciplines and to a range of the best independent senior schools across the country." Bea Grigg and Venetia Hamilton won academic scholarships to Rugby School and St Edward's, Oxford while George Stanford-Davis, Orlando Bayliss, Edward Scott and Morgan Matthews were awarded academic scholarships to Shrewsbury. Eve Leslie, won not only an academic scholarship to Malvern, but also music and drama scholarships.

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BREEZE ABOUT TOWN

Questions are certain to be asked after Powys County Council's planning committee approved a retrospective application from its former chairman Councillor David Price – the newly appointed High Sheriff of Powys. The council had received a tip-off that the councillor had been running a caravan site at Builth Wells for years without a certificate of lawfulness. In short he had 28 vans sited when only five were permitted. But despite opposition from some councillors, who wanted the application to either go before full council or even another county council, the licence was granted on the advice of the authority's legal team. Councillors were told to forget about individuals and concentrate on the facts. Mr Price stood down as chairman of the committee in May, claiming that his duties as High Sheriff would take up too much of his time. He remains a member of the committee but did not take part in last week's meeting. It also emerged that it was the second time the councillor had been forced to seek retrospective planning permission from Powys County Council – so what sort of message is this sending out to the public? It's likely there will be calls for the Independent councillor to stand down from the planning committee and surely he should do the decent thing, if he doesn't the council must take action under its own code of conduct to protect its reputation. Legally the planning committee probably made the only decision they could but morally I'm going to suggest they got it completely wrong and the seven members of the 10-strong group who voted approval will have to live with their conscience.

There's a massive education row brewing in Powys with schools struggling to cope with smaller budgets and Powys County Council threatening to wield the big stick against those overspending. Unfortunately the losers will be our children because their education is certain to suffer. High schools across the county have collectively hit back at council accusations that they are not doing enough to run within budget with chairs of governors issuing a hard-hitting statement that the authority is under-funding our education establishments. There is clear evidence that some schools are trying harder than others to stay afloat but when it comes to funding of secondary schools Powys funds the lowest average amount per individual pupil in Wales – and that's a fact.



The bypass is a huge infrastructure project



Carwyn Jones takes a look at the progress



Carwyn Jones chats to some of the workers

Bypass 'will deliver real roads boost to region'

The Newtown Bypass is taking shape and the First Minister has taken a look. MAT GROWCOTT reports

THE Newtown bypass will deliver a real boost to Mid Wales, First Minister Carwyn Jones said during a visit to the site of the £95 million scheme.

It has been more than two years since construction began on the project, and it is still on target to finish in early 2019.

Mr Jones visited the site to see the work for himself.

And while he said the scale of the work had taken him by surprise, he was pleased with the progress.

Pleased

He said: "I've been really pleased to see the progress being made on the Newtown Bypass."

"This is a significant development which will improve safety, relieve traffic congestion and ensure better access to jobs and services, delivering a real boost to the local economy."

"A strong emphasis has been placed on providing local employment and training opportunities and there are currently 16 apprentices and graduate trainees working on the bypass which is really good news."

"We have also worked closely with Powys County Council to develop Active Travel provisions which have been included as part of the scheme."

"The Newtown bypass is a great example of the Welsh Government's commitment to invest in our transport



Wales First Minister Carwyn Jones is briefed on progress

infrastructure, help industry grow and deliver for communities in Mid Wales."

During the tour, Mr Jones was shown the progress on the bypass, as well as the route used by diggers to clear the site.

Bigger

"It's a much bigger project than expected," he said.

"The route that the bypass has taken means there's a lot of bridges, and a lot of earth that needs to be moved."

"Local traffic will still be there and people who want to go to Newtown will still go there."

"I don't see there being a detrimental effect on the town."

"It's important to advertise it as a place to stop because people want to have a rest when they're driving."

"Now people know Newtown will be easier to get in and out of, it makes it more attractive, I'd argue."

"It's important that Powys and the town council here put up a few brown signs so that people understand the heritage here."

"There's so much in Newtown to offer to people."

As part of the development, the bridge across the Dolfor Valley was recently built.

Completed

Completed in April, it was one of the milestones of construction, allowing workers to easily get across the valley.

The bridge will now allow the remaining earthwork operations to take place.

The bypass to the south of Newtown will be approximately 6.5km long and extends from the A489 Llanidloes Road near Glandulas Holiday Park west of the town to the A483 Pool Road to its east.

It is hoped the scheme will improve safety by allowing large, high sided heavy goods and agricultural vehicles to travel through the area away from residential areas as well as reducing traffic congestion on nearby roads.

During the visit, the First Minister met with the workforce including apprentices working on the bypass.

A total of £10.3 million has been spent on employing people from Wales which includes apprentices. Small and medium sized enterprises in Wales have also benefited from an £11.5 million spend as a result of the development.

WORKING FOR YOU



On September 5, the Boundary Commission will present to Government its final proposals for reforming the Parliamentary boundaries on which the 2022 General Election will be contested. The proposals will be based on 600 constituencies, a reduction of 50 from the current 650. The Boundary Commission for Wales will present its final proposals for reducing the number of constituencies in Wales from the current 40 to just 28. The population of each constituency in England and Wales will be around 76,000. The number will diverge from the average by a maximum of just five per cent. There are aspects of these changes I accept as being fair and reasonable, and aspects which I dismiss as being both pointless and damaging to our democracy. I'm on record as dismissing the changes as "crackers" – not an elegant description but gives an idea of what I think of them.

The reason a reduction in the number of constituencies is happening is what I considered an ill-thought through publicity stunt by the Government led by former Prime Minister, David Cameron. Laughably the purpose was supposedly to reduce the cost of politics – at the same time as greatly increasing the size of the unelected House of Lords. Hardly much of a boost to democracy! And the reality is that the larger constituencies will mean greater cost of support staff.

Personally, I do not think that MPs will accept the new boundaries. Interestingly, if the next General Election is held as scheduled in 2022, there will be enough time for Boundary Commissioners to draw up a new constituency map based on 650 constituencies. I very much hope this is what will happen.

I accept that whatever new constituency boundaries are agreed, it will have an impact on the historic constituency of Montgomeryshire. Personally, I would quite like no review at all, in that Montgomeryshire would remain unchanged. But population changes and the creation of the National Assembly make that an unreasonable position. There should be an 'equalisation' of constituency size across the UK. That means change and at least some disruption. But for goodness sake let's not multiply the disruption by reducing the number of MPs from 650 to 600 at the same. That would almost destroy parliamentary democracy in rural mid Wales.

Glyn Davies
Montgomeryshire MP

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Letters

Christian message needs to be heard

THE injustice to the Windrush generations, the disgrace of many high profile men and their abuse of women, the resignation of a Cabinet Minister because she misled Parliament, the grooming of young girls by groups of men, the abuse of young children and the enormous increase in knife crime in the country by young people, even children has created a huge outcry among the public.

It raises serious questions about the

widely held view today that human beings evolved from pond scum.

Did we really evolve from simple cells as taught in our educational establishments?

Or were we created by a just and holy God who placed in each human being a conscience and moral compass which has led to this great outcry of anger against such behaviour?

We read in the Bible that God created man in His own image giving him a con-

science and instructions as to how to behave to please Him, but we are a rebellious lot and do not want to be answerable to Him for our behaviour.

If the Christian message continues to be silenced I fear our nation will continue to deteriorate.

God is not mocked, whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap.

DAVID BURTON
Calverhall

The House of Lords still has a place if it is changed a bit

RECENT votes in the House of Lords, contrary to the Brexit referendum vote, have brought the usual calls to scrap the Upper House. I wonder if they would say the same if the Lords voted in favour of Brexit and the Commons voted against it?

The Lords have sometimes shown themselves more in tune with ordinary people than the Commons and have made valuable contributions to our governmental system.

Before calling for the abolition of the House of Lords, people should give some thought to the consequences. The Lords is essentially a revisionary body to take a second look at legislation before it becomes law.

They cannot block legislation passed by the Commons completely. Do we really want there to be no check on what the Commons can do?

That would make it a very dictatorial body. If it is replaced by a second elected body, which one would have the final say as both could claim to be a democratically elected body representing the people?

A second elected body would be more expensive – elections cost money and there would be bi-elections – and we would probably have to pay them.

Look at the problems the American system has when the two legislatures have different party majorities.

There are problems with the House of Lords which neither major party has got to grips with over many years. There should be no more than 200-300 members, appointed by a commission independent of the political parties, it should be non-political, and only able to suggest revisions back to the Commons, and members should have to attend for a set period before qualifying for an allowance – or paid an hourly rate.

RICHARD CAMP
Wellington

It's people that really matter

AFTER the recent local elections my friend sent me a copy of a tweet he had forwarded to @Number10press

Are we stuck here forever, no-one forming a majority, no-one winning, in a permanent Brexit transition, promising to set up a trading system we never build the infrastructure for, with sub-par leaders bickering at one another in the Commons.

John Pienaar on BBC news referred to the voting trend as those who "could be bothered". With the all this disinterest shown, isn't it about time politicians in general took stock and pulled their socks up to deliver services that serve the people not their own jaundiced policies?

JOHN HARRISON
Whixall

Hospital rose again after severe fire struck



In a week in which Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital celebrated the 70th birthday of the NHS it is worth remembering how far the hospital has come over the generations. This photo was taken during a fire which gutted the hospital, at that time known as Shropshire Orthopaedic Hospital, on the night of January 27, 1948. Patients were moved to safety by nurses and military and civilian helpers and nobody was hurt. The image is from the Geoff Charles Collection at the National Library of Wales.

These important green areas need to be protected

WHEN Oswestry faces significant development, hundreds of new homes and a large new industrial site, and when there are fears for child and adult obesity, surely Oswestry Town Council and Shropshire Council should seek to protect playing fields such as Maesyllan and The Wilfred Owen Green from short sighted attempts to turn them into car parks?

Surely it is a special sports and health advantage, and also aesthetically pleasing, for a school to have green leafy surroundings and a prestigious playing field, such as the historic Maesyllan, scene of the last great battle of King Oswald, opposite to it, rather than a mundane turn off such as a car park?

If Oswestry School wishes to increase pupil intake, then I would think it is best advised to retain one of its greatest assets, Maesyllan field, and its old historic buildings and seek to build an additional modern science or languages complex or campus on another site in the environs of Oswestry.

JUNE MCCARTHY
Oswestry

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Readers' Letters,
The Chronicle,
14 Salop Road,
Oswestry, SY11 2NU

EMAIL

iaim.stjohn@
shropshirestar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Tax arrangements must be looked at

THE charitable status of private schools is something that needs to be looked at.

Registered as charities in England and Wales the independent school sector enjoys tax relief of around 80 per cent. Private schools will qualify for tax rebates totalling £522m over the next five years. These schools are businesses and are not truly charities and they should pay their dues. If we scrapped the charitable status for these schools, the savings would go some way to redress the balance with our state schools.

ROD SHAW
Shrewsbury

Hit them all in their pockets if they don't park properly

HERE in Chirk we have a common problem.

Outside the infant's school there are zig-zag lines.

All schools have them.

They are there to create a large gap, car free.

The gaps allow us and our children a safe place to cross the road.

The junior school is just up the road and most people have kids in both schools, so have to cross over.

My main concern is it is the same cars, day in day out, are parked on the "safety zone", thus endangering children's lives by blocking the safe place to cross the road.

On a plus side, the camera at the end of Chapel Lane has been repaired.

Hopefully those in charge of it could turn it towards the school at the usual times and somebody could start issuing fines.

Hit them in the wallet/purse.

It's the only way to sort it.

RICHARD JONES
Chirk

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New move to solve place name arguments

A WELSH language commissioner is hoping to solve place name spelling problems and arguments with the launch of a new standardised list.

The directory will feature 3,000 entries and took years to compile.

It could help to settle debates over how place names are spelt.

Many names in Wales have different spellings and one in English and one in Welsh.

It is unclear whether Llansantffraid, near Oswestry, will be included in the directory, after opposition to having a 't' in the name reared its head again recently by the vandalism of the town signs.

Professor David Thorne, chairman of the panel of experts which drew up the list, said place names were an important part of a country's heritage.

He said: "They deserve to be cherished, protected and safeguarded."

"Our hope is that this list, which includes over 3,000 sites, is a step towards preserving the wealth of place names that we have in Wales."

Also on the panel was Dr Dylan Foster Evans, of Cardiff University, who said he hopes the suggested changes would be adopted over time.

He said: "Our business is to give a clear lead – we are not in the business of enforcing it on anyone."

"It's matter for local authorities or the highway authorities about what they do with road signs."

"But the practice is, when they need replacing that's when they will use a sign with a different spelling."

"Although we might like a standardised spelling in both languages we might not always get there but the idea is that we give recommendations that people can use."

Artistic talent is recognised



Jennifer Cyffin-Jones and Luke Windsor



The work will be shown in Birmingham



The artwork has been commended by judges

TWO Oswestry School art students have been highly commended by Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery

Jennifer Cyffin-Jones in Year 11 and Luke Windsor in Sixth Form have been selected to have their work shown in the gallery having en-

Report by Jonny Drury

tered the Inspire 2018 art competition. Now in its third year Inspire 2018 is a youth art competition for five to 19 year olds, this year taking its inspiration from colour.

Entrants were challenged to demonstrate

how they were inspired by colour or what colour meant to them. The entries displayed were selected by a judging panel formed of museum staff, local artists and young people.

Out of the 401 entries to the competition only 74 were selected for display and Jenny and Luke's pieces were chosen as to be highly commended.

The exhibition which showcases the work of finalists and winners runs from July 22 to September 15 and is free to enter.

Oswestry School offers art and design scholarships that are awarded to talented artists who have a passion and love of the subject. For more information email enquiries@oswestryschool.org.uk

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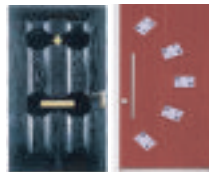
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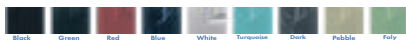
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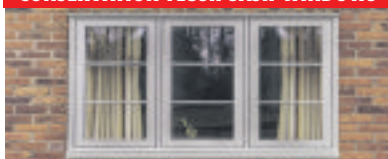


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Reading challenge ready to launch

THIS year's National Summer Reading Challenge that aims to keep primary aged children reading over the summer holiday will be launched at libraries in Oswestry, Gobowen and Ellesmere on Saturday.

The challenge is to read six library books over the summer and as they do they earn goodies and get a medal and certificate when they complete the challenge. Every year there is a theme, and this year it's The Beano. This year there is also a challenge for pre-school children where they earn stars for each visit to the library.

Spiritual centre to meet up again

OSWESTRY Spiritual Centre welcomes Jim and Jen Green from Halesowen as its guest mediums for its demonstration night this evening (Thursday).

Organisers say Jim and Jen work together and link with spirit and bring messages from loved ones and friends.

There will be free spiritual reiki and healing sessions available after the demonstration.

The event starts at 7.30pm and doors open at 7pm.

The cost is £3.50.

The meeting takes place in the Cambrian Room in the Memorial Hall in Oswestry.

Coffee morning will take place

A COFFEE morning will be held in the Corn Exchange in Welshpool tomorrow (Friday).

The event is being held to raise money for the Welshpool 1940s weekend.

Open from 9.30am till midday there will also be a raffle and tombola



Ian Haigh, David Davies, Maria Jones, Mike Jones and Denzil Ellis at the cheque presentation

Tree appeal helps out good causes

THE Rotary Club of Oswestry has wrapped up its Tree of Light Appeal with the presentation of the final three cheques to Midlands Air Ambulance, Severn Hospice and the Lingen Davies Cancer Fund.

This year's appeal raised £6,000 which was distributed between 11 local charities.

The club says the final three bene-

Report by Jonny Drury

ficiaries are all critical to residents of the Oswestry and district area and demonstrate the importance of such local charitable giving. Receiving the cheque Lizzy Coleman, events and fundraising officer for Lingen Davies, said: "Public support continues to be needed; with the centre planning for its 40th anniversary in 2019 our Ruby Appeal aims to raise £1.25m by June 5 next year."

Lucy Ruff, fundraising manager at Severn Hospice, thanked all the donors to the fund for their continuing assistance.

Maria Jones from the Midlands Air Ambulance said: "The Tree of Light makes a difference year on year as our members work hard to raise more than the previous year."

Rotary Club of Oswestry members Ian Haigh, David Davies, Mike Jones and Denzil Ellis attended the presentations when the cheques were handed over.



Mike Jones, Lucy Ruff and Denzil Ellis at the cheque handover



Ian Haigh, Lizzy Coleman, Mike Jones and Denzil Ellis

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Both hospitals would have a 24 hour urgent care centre (for illnesses and injuries that are not life- or limb-threatening but need urgent attention). You would also be able to access outpatient services, midwife-led services and tests at both hospitals.

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Alternatively, you can find out more and fill out our survey at www.nhsfuturefit.org

NEWS IN BRIEF

Police appeal to find man

POLICE are appealing for information about a man wanted on recall to prison.

Dyfed-Powys Police has launched the appeal to find 26-year-old James Lee Wilkinson within the Llanfyllin area.

He has connections with Liverpool, Dorset and Welshpool, and is wanted on recall to prison.

Anyone with information about his whereabouts is urged to contact police by calling 101.

Alternatively people with information about his whereabouts can call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Organisation's advice on fire

AS the dry weather continues Natural Resources Wales has issued an appeal for people not to light fires at any of the sites it manages.

The organisation manages more than 100,000 acres of land in Wales which are at significantly increased risk of damage by fire.

Fires have already affected the organisation's land at Newborough forest on Anglesey, Geirionydd in the Conwy Valley and Cwm Rheidol near Aberystwyth.

It is calling on people not to light any fires or barbecues at any of the forests, visitor sites and nature reserves it manages throughout Wales.

Smokers are also asked to be extra-vigilant with their cigarette ends.

It is the first time in the five years since it was established that NRW has made such an appeal.

Grant funding offer will hit the right note

Report by Jonny Drury

GRANTS ranging from £250 to £5,000 are being offered to Powys organisations in a bid to develop professionally led musical opportunities for young people.

The Powys Youth Music Development Scheme is set up to provide funding to help nurture the musical talents of nine to 25 year olds in the county.

Applications can be made for funding to help with music workshops, rehearsals, concerts, summer schools and transport costs.

It can also be used for production or performance costs, including venue hire, artists' fees and technical requirements as well as other costs.

Grants can also be used to help cover the costs of providing orchestral leaders, music practitioners or tutors and sound technicians.

Cllr Rachel Powell is Powys County Council's cabinet officer for young people and culture and she explained: "We want to encourage young Powys people to take part in musical activities that are imaginative, challenging and inspiring and, through this fund, help encourage our young artists and allow them to develop their musical skills."

"We want young people who wish to create high quality music - whatever the musical style - to be supported by this funding."

Midsummer theatre at castle



Chapterhouse Theatre Company is coming to Powis Castle

THE popular Chapterhouse Theatre Company is bringing a production of A Midsummer Night's Dream to picturesque Powis Castle in Welshpool later this month.

The audience will be whisked away on a thrilling journey to a magical forest to meet star-crossed lovers, playful fairies and hilarious travelling players.

Elizabethan costumes, a wonderful musical score and enchanting woodland creatures come together to make this an evening of summer garden theatre.

Chapterhouse Theatre Company is now in its 19th year of touring open-air theatre to country houses, castles and heritage sites across the UK and Ireland.

From the first year of performances at 30 venues with Romeo and Juliet in 2000, Chapterhouse now visits over 180 venues every year, and has become a greatly anticipated addition to thousands of theatre-goers' calendars.

The performance at Powis Castle will take place on July 24, organisers say.

Survey tells of waiting problems in A&E areas

THE number of people visiting A&E departments across Wales is increasing and patients are often experiencing an uncomfortable wait with issues surrounding privacy, according to a new report.

The major review of A&E patient experience across Wales also reveals people tended to wait longer to be seen during winter months.

Powys doesn't have an A&E with many Montgomeryshire patients using the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, however a number of patients use Bronglais Hospital in Aberystwyth.

Patients responded to the survey and some had complaints regarding their comfort level while waiting to be seen, ranging from being made to sit up when it caused discomfort to a lack of seating, and the seating that was provided being too uncomfortable.

One patient stated they were diabetic and had been on the unit for five hours and 20 minutes and had been standing for a while before a chair became available. Other concerns raised include corridor care, as although most people surveyed were happy with the discretion they received, several respondents complained about the privacy levels in corridors. Individuals interviewed for the report also displayed Meanwhile, the overall reaction to A&E staff communication was significantly positive and they received a great deal of praise. Mutale Merrill, chair of the board of CHCs said: "We have real concerns about the discomfort people feel while waiting to be seen at A&E departments across Wales."

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Farmers told more about growth of halal food sector

MORE than 100 farmers attended the first in a series of open meetings providing information and advice on the supply requirements for the halal food sector.

The meeting was held during a busy market day at Welshpool Livestock Market on Monday last week.

Under the auspices of the Livestock Auctioneers Association (LAA), guest speaker and AHDB halal sector manager Awal Fuisseini, alongside Rizvan Khalid of Euro Quality Lambs, spoke of market requirements.

They spoke about the requirements needed with a focus around supply for Muslim festivals and Qurbani.

A rapidly growing market, made up of a largely younger, more affluent demographic, is seeing demand for halal-certified foods continue to increase, the meeting in Welshpool was told.

“While most sheep farmers will be very aware of the halal market opportunities and demand around Muslim festivals, it is detail that is all important,” explained John Bre-

ton, LAA chairman and partner at St Asaph and Oswestry Livestock Markets.

“It is important to be aware of the specifics. “Both speakers were able to provide very informative presentations not just on the market opportunity and requirements, but also the science and method of halal slaughter techniques.”

The meeting also heard how cultural differences within the Muslim trade can influence demand between, for example, mutton or lamb. Attendees also heard how taste preferences

are changing amongst the younger UK demographic.

“What came across clearly is that the Muslim market is increasingly important to the sheep trade in the UK,” adds Mr Brereton.

The event on July 2 was the first of a series of meetings to be hosted at livestock auction markets around the country.

A further meeting was due to be held, at Ruthin Livestock Market yesterday (Wednesday). The meetings are free to attend, and visitors are welcome.

New person at helm of club



David Davies hands over to Ian Glenister at Oswestry Rotary Club

THERE is a new person at the helm of the Rotary Club of Oswestry.

David Davies, president for 2017-18, recently handed over the reins of the club to Ian Glenister for 2018-19.

A member of the Oswestry club since 1996 with over 22 years of rotary experience, Ian chaired its Foundation Committee for many years and has often been one of those responsible for overseeing grants made by the club's Mary Hignett Bequest Fund.

Ian is a partner at Lanyon Bowdler, one of the most recognised firms of solicitors in Shropshire and Herefordshire.

After qualifying in 1977, Ian became a partner in a Northamptonshire firm before joining what was then the long-established Oswestry firm of Longueville Gittins (LG Solicitors) in 1990 where he has been a partner since 1996.

Specialising in commercial and agricul-

tural property, Ian acts for a number of large landed estates and continued as a partner with Lanyon Bowdler when they merged with LG Solicitors in 2010.

In quieter moments Ian likes travelling in Italy and Sicily and can be found relaxing by walking his terrier Poppy.

“I am looking forward to my year as president,” said Ian.

“David is a hard act to follow and I'd like to thank him for his successful year.

“There will be many challenges ahead.

“Our club carries out many projects in the Oswestry area and I will be able to have a deeper involvement this year.”

He added: “Through the network of clubs across the world we are particularly proud that rotary is making a difference in eradicating polio.

“Closer to home, we also value the opportunities that we provide for young people and our local community.”

County will get benefits of investment

SHROPSHIRE is benefitting from a £21.9 million investment in the region thanks to the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership.

The Marches LEP has promised to create thousands of new homes and jobs over the next 20 years – a pledge re-iterated at the launch of its annual report in Westminster.

It says it will also invest £7.7 million in the roll-out of superfast broadband to give 77,000 extra homes and businesses high speeds by the end of next year.

Projects in the pipeline include the Newport Innovation and Enterprise Package, bringing 1,070 houses and 954 jobs to the area and the Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings.

It also helped lever in money for improvements to the A5/A483 junctions on the Oswestry bypass to help the town's housebuilding schemes.

MPs were at the launch of the annual report along with senior government officials and leading civil servants.

Chairman of Marches LEP Graham Wynn said the partnership had driven economic growth across the region over the last 12 months and had ambitious plans to build on its success over the next year. “We are pinpointing the key areas which will help the region sustain and develop growth and

Report by Sue Austin

drawing up a new, local industrial strategy to underpin this plan,” he said.

The partnership has already helped attract £285m of government, European, public and private sector funding to Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.

“In the past 12 months we have secured a fresh grown deal which will see £21.9 million invested in projects to boost the region's skills,” Mr Wynn said.

“We want to ensure we create a culture of innovation and train our people in the skills needed to deliver on our promise to create thousands of new homes and jobs over the next 20 years.”

Marches LEP is calling on the government to support an integrated transport system. It is contributing £6 million to the Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Package, and supporting the Telford bus station scheme.

Owen Paterson MP, one of those at the launch, said the partnership had gone to Westminster in force. He said: “I am pleased the plans include working with the Welsh Government to improve the A5/A483 corridor that crosses the Shropshire/Welsh border and to improve train services not only between Shropshire/Wales and the Midlands but also the Shropshire to London service.”

Burst water pipe reported

A BURST pipe saw water bubbling through a main street in Oswestry, damaging the road surface.

The steady leak of water on the kerbside at the junction of Church Street and Upper Brook Street, first noticed at the begin-

ning of last week, led to several people reporting it to Severn Trent.

Dorothy Thomas, said: “The sight of all that water being wasted concerned me, this at a time when Severn Trent is advising customers to not use hose-

Donors on the increase but more needed

NEW figures reveal nine people from Shropshire became lifesaving deceased organ donors over the last year, helping the UK reach its highest ever number of donors.

More and more families in the area are supporting donation. There has been an increase in donors in Shropshire over the last decade.

NHS Blood and Transplant has released the figures to mark the publication of its annual Transplant Activity Report.

The report reveals there is growing support for organ donation in Shropshire and around the country. Nationally, there was a record number of organ donors, with 1,574 people saving lives through deceased organ donation over the last year.

However the overall shortage of donors remains and there is an urgent need for more people to support donation.

Around three people die a day in need of a donated organ but many people have never told their relatives they want to save lives.

Letting your family know that you want to donate will make it much easier for them to support what you want.

There are still 30 people from Shropshire on the transplant waiting list and a donated organ is the last and only hope for many people on the list.

Not guilty verdicts on race tragedy

A CYCLING governing body and organiser of a downhill mountain biking race have been cleared of safety failures after a tragedy.

After a trial lasting several weeks at Mold Crown Court they were acquitted of charges brought following the death of 29-year-old spectator Judith Garrett. She died after being struck when a competitor lost control of his bike and fell.

The tragedy happened in August 2014 near Llangollen. The prosecution had alleged it was “entirely avoidable.”

But the jury cleared event organiser Michael Marsden, 41, of Lancaster, of two offences which he denied. British Cycling Federation was found not guilty of a single allegation.

At the end of the prosecution case Judge Rowlands had directed the jury to find Kevin Duckworth, 41, of Accrington, Lancashire, allegedly a race marshal who was resting on a crash mat, not guilty of failing to take reasonable care to ensure the health and safety of people at the event.

Outside court, Miss Garrett's parents, Lorna and Bill, who attended the trial throughout, said: “Almost four years ago our world was torn apart with the death of our wonderful daughter, Judith, who was so full of life. Our daughter, Jane, lost her younger sister and her boyfriend, Peter, saw his plans for the future shattered.”

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Special needs places plan for school

SPECIAL educational needs places could be created at a village school near Oswestry.

Shropshire Council hopes to offer up to 10 places at Whittington Primary School from September.

They would be available for primary age learners with communication and interaction difficulties, including autism conditions.

A consultation into the proposal has been launched. Ed Potter, deputy cabinet member with responsibility for education, said: "Shropshire Council is committed to promoting high standards for all children and young people, including those with special educational needs.

"We would like to receive comments from all members of the communities who have a view on the proposal.

"The final decision, which will take account of all representations and comments, will be made following the end of the consultation period."

Carl Rogers, headteacher of Whittington CE Primary School, said: "I am very excited about the possibility of developing specialist provision within our school.

"Because of our excellent reputation and wealth of experience, I believe that we are ideally suited to support the local authority's plan to develop high needs provision attached to mainstream primary schools. The planned provision will not only allow us to improve the quality of our offer for children with complex needs, but to improve the quality of our offer for all of the children in our school."

Joker's cold caller chat goes viral

A MAN who posted an hilarious video of his response to a cold caller asking about a car accident he had been involved in has become an internet hit.

Tommy Lewis from Oswestry, like many others, had become frustrated at cold callers calling him asking if he had been in a car accident.

When he was called from a cold caller on June 9, he recorded his hilarious response and posted it on Facebook, where it has gone viral and received 4.2 million views.

A cold caller asks him what accident he has been involved in, and after telling him he should know the details, he says he was involved in a crash in February.

He tells the call handler that six people died in the crash in which he drove off a cliff, and despite hearing this the caller continues to ask questions.

Mr Lewis said he lost his leg in the crash, when the call handler unexpectedly asked did he look for his leg.

Following this the call handler politely ended the call and hung up.

The video was posted on line, with people commenting on Mr Lewis' post said how hilarious his response was.

Festival visit for Syrian refugees

A GROUP of Syrian refugees who were re-homed in Oswestry two years ago were special guests at the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod.

Chairman of the show, Dr Rhys Davies, extended a welcome to Syrian families who fled their war home country to come to Britain and settled in Oswestry.

Four families went to the show along with a family they also know from Llangollen, and met president Sir Terry Waite who spoke with them about their experiences and how they've settled into life in the UK.

They also enjoyed entertainment throughout the event, and volunteer advocate for the Oswestry Welcomes Refugees group, Jools Payne, said it was nice that the refugees were given such a warm welcome. She said: "It was really nice for them to be there and be special guests of the chairman."

Call is made to help keep canals shipshape



The country's canals have been restored and are now used for many activities

THIS year Britain's waterways celebrate 50 years of renaissance – turning from a national disgrace into a national treasure, with power to improve the happiness and wellbeing of millions of people across the nation.

The Shropshire Union Canal was one of the canals and rivers protected from dereliction and destruction by the 1968 British Transport Act and, with the hard work of volunteers and canal lovers, the waterways have become vital

outdoor spaces that reach into the heart of many towns and cities.

To mark this anniversary, the waterways and wellbeing charity Canal & River Trust is organising practical volunteering events, Towpath Taskforces, throughout July and is calling for more people than ever to experience the benefits of visiting their local historic waterway.

No experience is necessary to join one of

these groups which meet regularly to carry out tasks such as litter-picking, clearing vegetation, gardening, painting lock gates and making small repairs.

Volunteers can join one event or take part regularly.

The Canal & River Trust is calling for everyone who loves to be outdoors and would like to make a difference to their historic canals, their local community and to their own health and



The Shropshire Union Canal is a haven for boaters, cyclists and walkers

wellbeing, to join one of the events to mark the 50th anniversary.

Fifty years on, canals are more popular than ever with boaters, walkers, cyclists and anglers.

And trust research shows that spending time by water makes people happier and improves their life satisfaction.

For more details of your local canal, activities or Towpath Taskforce events, visit www.canalrivertrust.org.uk

Eisteddfod extravaganza hits the right note again



Coleen Nolan attended the celebration to lead a NHS singalong



The legendary Van Morrison was a huge hit



Eisteddfod president Terry Waite once again supported the event

Report by Jonny Drury

VISITORS arrived in their droves to enjoy this year's Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod.

Once again the festival saw performances from young people around the world as well as performances from some of the country's most popular musical stars including Van Morrison, Alfie Boe and Kaiser Chiefs.

The Eisteddfod celebrated 10 years of its Inclusion Project with the performance of its newly commissioned piece Send A Message. This year's participating groups included students from Derwen College in Gobowen. A charity that uses volunteer doctors to advise their colleagues in war zones and low resource countries using encrypted social media won the Rotary International Peace Award. Dr Waheed Arian and the Arian Teleheal charity was awarded the accolade during international celebration concert at the Eisteddfod.

The Rotary National Peace Award was also presented at the ceremony. Former social worker, Sara Rowbotham, who was unable to attend the presentation, was acknowledged for her work with the Rochdale Crisis Intervention Team for the NHS.

Among the supporters of the evening was the British Ironwork Centre near Oswestry which won last year's peace prize. Eisteddfod president Terry Waite CBE said: "Once again we were presented with a truly outstanding shortlist."

Meanwhile during the Eisteddfod week Coleen Nolan led the signing in a live nationwide singalong of the iconic Beatles hit With a Little Help From My Friends to help celebrate the 70th birthday of the NHS.



Alfie Boe performed at the Eisteddfod



Performers of all ages took part in this year's international celebration



Different cultures were celebrated during the popular street parade

University graduates' job success

BOOMING opportunities in the UK food and drink sector are great news for Shropshire's Harper Adams University's 2017 food degree graduates – 100 per cent of whom were employed six months after graduating.

Of those, 92 per cent moved directly into "graduate" level roles, with average food graduate starting salaries at an average of £22,000 over the last three years.

Food sector growth also benefited Harper's business graduates, who achieved an employment rate of 98 per cent, with 89.13 per cent in "graduate" roles with the average salary increasing to £21,746 for the 2017 leaver. Careers service manager Maria Simpson said: "The number of jobs in the food and drink sector has risen. It now employs one in seven people in the UK. Our graduates have been able to seize the opportunities presented by this sector boom thanks to their studies and experience gained during sandwich placements making them highly employable as they complete their degrees. Providing talent for the food chain, from field to fork, is core to the university's mission and the latest graduate employment figures prove that we are achieving against this standard."

The figures come from the latest Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE 2016/17) survey. Harper Adams University as a whole achieved a graduate employment rate of 97.2 per cent, for full-time, first-degree students who graduated in September 2017.

Further good news from the DLHE outcomes included a second successive yearly increase in the overall average salary paid to Harper Adams graduates, up to £21,429 from £21,381 last year, and £20,764 the previous year.

Connectivity is key to future, says politician

Report by Jonny Drury

IMPROVED access to high speed broadband and mobile connectivity should be at the heart of any Mid Wales Growth Deal according to Montgomeryshire Assembly Member, Russell George.

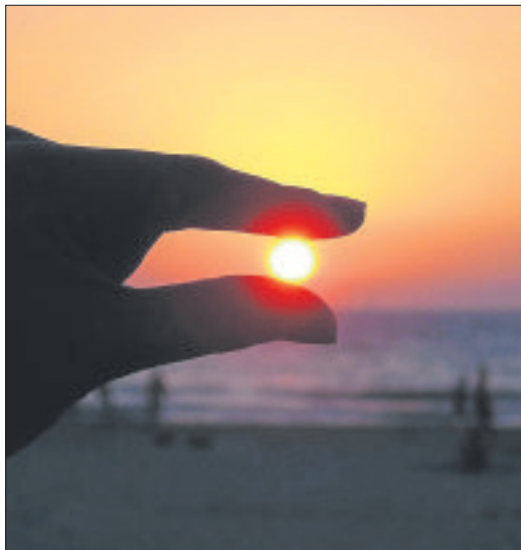
Speaking in the National Assembly for Wales, Mr George, who is also chair of the National Assembly's Economy & Infrastructure Committee, called on the Welsh Government to promote a commitment to include digital connectivity as a central plank of any future Mid Wales Growth Deal to ensure that the region is "plugged in and connected to the wider region".

Mr George said: "When the Welsh Government announced its digital innovation review earlier this year, they said that they wanted to 'develop the potential of our regions so that they would support better jobs closer to home,' an aspiration to which we can all subscribe.

"However, in order for Mid Wales to be given the best opportunity of seizing the economic opportunities which will be presented by the UK Government's Industrial Strategy, it is essential that we become plugged in and connected to the wider Midlands economic engine.

"In order for this to occur, the digital divide which currently exists between rural Mid Wales and its urban counterparts in South Wales and the Midlands must be eradicated."

Warm weather warning is issued



Hot conditions can get bosses into hot water

EMPLOYERS have been warned they could end up getting into hot water if they don't look after their workers in the warm weather.

Shropshire human resources expert Isabel Lapper says bosses cannot ignore the effect the heatwave has on staff.

Ms Lapper said bosses have a legal duty to make sure employees are not exposed to unreasonable temperatures.

And that means they should carry out a hot weather risk assessment – and then act upon it – if staff complain about their working environment as temperatures continue to sizzle.

Ms Lapper, who runs Telford-based HR Solutions Shropshire, says with the heatwave set to last for at least bosses should keep a close eye on working conditions.

She said: "The law doesn't state what the minimum or maximum temperature in the workplace should be because that depends on the type of work. Clearly, someone working in a foundry, for example, is going to be exposed to higher temperatures than someone in a cold store.

"But the law does state that employers should provide a 'reasonable' temperature in the workplace. The temperature in a normal workplace should be around 16C, or slightly cooler if lots of physical work is being carried out." Ms Lapper said that all companies should respond if workers were starting to wilt in the searing heat.

Firm on the shortlist for rural award

A SHROPSHIRE business has been shortlisted in the Rural Business Awards.

The Rural Professional department of Halls will be judged in July as part of the Midlands Best Rural Professional Services category.

The final round of judging will take place on Thursday next week and the winner of the category will be announced at an awards ceremony on October 11 at Eastwood Hall in Nottingham. Speaking on behalf of Halls, David Giles, managing director, said: "It's a great achievement to have been shortlisted as a Midlands finalist.

"Our Rural Professional department works throughout the region helping landowners and farmers on everything from planning to valuations and it will be very encouraging to them that we have been recognised as leaders in this sector."

The Rural Business Awards were established in late 2014 by Jemma Clifford and Anna Price – two business owners who work in rural Leicestershire. The first awards were presented in October 2015 and the awards are now entering their fourth year.

The awards seek to acknowledge the breadth and depth of opportunity presented by the Great British countryside, as well as to celebrate the achievements of rural businesses, from engineering through to artisan food producers and professional services organisations.

Halls is one of Shropshire's oldest businesses and was established in 1845. With each generation the business has grown and diversified. It now includes agricultural auctions, commercial property, rural professional services and fine art departments along with a group of seven estate agents.

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Hotel and caravan site plans

A COLLEGE which is facing financial pressures is launching a range of measures to ensure its future.

Derwen College in Gobowen near Oswestry, which provides education for students with disabilities and learning difficulties, is hoping to open a hotel and a caravan site to bring in additional funding. It is also promoting its respite short break holidays for young people. The college says it has been badly affected by the implementation of the Children's and Families Act 2014 which makes local authorities responsible for the students' education rather than the funding coming from a central pot.

Chief executive Ruth Thomas said parents now have to battle with their local authorities so their children can study at Derwen College.

The college, deemed outstanding by Ofsted, is hoping to build on its work experience partnership with Premier Inn by opening six hotel rooms to the public.

It would also like to create a touring caravan site, with possible glamping pods, in woodland on the campus.

Already popular is the college's garden centre, cafe and restaurant, used to give students valuable training and work experience.

Short breaks at the Derwen will be the subject of an open day on August 23.

Mrs Thomas said: "Young adults aged 18-25 years of age do enjoy a break at Derwen. Guests can take part in a range of activities and trips, as well as making use of the campus facilities."

Reminder is given over dog mess impact

AN appeal for dog owners to pick up dog mess when walking across fields is being made after a spate of outbreaks of a disease which can cause cattle and sheep to abort their unborn young.

Increasing reports of Neospora outbreaks in cattle were highlighted at the meeting of the National Access Forum for Wales held in Welshpool.

The disease, carried in dog faeces, does not harm dogs and often goes undetected. But it can harm cattle and sheep and can lead to abortions in livestock.

Heddd Pugh from the National Farmers' Union, Cymru, said the reports of outbreaks were coming from all areas in Wales.

Mr Pugh said: "The disease is found in dog faeces, which can contaminate the animals' grazing pasture.

"That is why it's important that dog owners always pick up after their dogs.

"Dog owners are also encouraged to keep their dogs away from animal food and water troughs as the disease can also be spread that way."

He added: "The impacts of Neospora can result in significant costs and distress for farmers."

Surgical robot could be bought

A SURGICAL robot could be brought in to assist with operations in Shropshire's urology department, health bosses have revealed.

The department at Royal Shrewsbury Hospital offers comprehensive services for patients with various urological diseases.

These conditions are usually diseases affecting the kidneys, ureters, bladders, prostate glands and testes.

Simon Wright, chief executive of Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust (SaTH), which runs RSH and Telford's Princess Royal Hospital, says the trust is looking to build a business case to buy the robot, which would cost in the region of £500,000.

Surgeons who use surgical robots find that for many procedures it enhances precision, flexibility and control during the operation.

Celebrations are held to mark 70th birthday of NHS



The commemorative sculpture by the British Ironwork Centre is unveiled

CELEBRATIONS have been held to mark the 70th birthday of the NHS.

Staff at Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital marked the occasion by holding a Bake Off Generation Game-style challenge.

The hospital welcomed Diana Beard, former Great British Bake Off contestant, from Alkington, near Whitchurch, to be part of the celebrations.

Diana decorated an NHS70 themed cake

masterpiece which was recreated by five teams from the hospital.

Team crowned the winners was made up of project manager Louis McDonald and MCSI consultant Naveen Kumar.

The hospital's facilities team also organised a street party in Denbigh's Restaurant which featured a menu of traditional party food.

Balloons were also donated by Balloons for all Occasions, which is based inside Oswestry

Indoor Market, to help decorate Denbigh's ahead of the street party.

While all of this was happening, Mark Brandreth, chief executive, attended the national NHS70 service with four members of staff Olivia Evans, Christine Lee, Aheed Osman and Pip Page-Davies at Westminster Abbey.

Meanwhile a fun run and fun day was held at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital to mark the NHS birthday.



Lindsey Leach, Julie Roberts, Diana Beard, Donna St John and Allen Edwards

During the celebrations a new sculpture was unveiled. The commemorative sculpture was produced by The British Ironwork Centre near Oswestry using obsolete hospital equipment. The business also sponsored goodie bags which were given to those who attended the event.

All proceeds made from the fun day and fun run will be divided between SaTH Charity's 'End of Life Care Swan Fund' and 'Living Well With Dementia Appeal'.

Nothing kept in reserve during military challenge



Mark Brandreth, chief executive, with the trust's staff reservists

Report by Jonny Drury

IT'S not every day you see a hospital chief executive and a consultant battle it out head to head in a military command task, while blind-folded, in front of staff and patients.

But that's what happened when a field at Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital was transformed into a challenging assault course for a command task.

It saw Mark Brandreth, chief executive, and Joy Chowdhury, spinal injuries consultant, literally jumping through hoops to raise awareness of Reserves Day and the contribution NHS personnel make to the Armed Forces.

Reserves Day is an annual event when reserves swap their regular work uniforms for their military clothing to raise the profile of their voluntary service roles.

To mark the national event, staff and patients gathered round the hospital field to watch Mr Brandreth and Mr Chowdhury be tested on their agility, teamwork and communication skills – while being guided by a partner, blind-folded, through the course – while also being distracted and heckled by their colleagues. There was also a group command task, where staff worked together to decode a puzzle, demonstrating perseverance and teamwork.

At the hospital, there are three members of staff, who serve as Army Reserves with the 202 (Midlands) Field Hospital – they are Rebecca Warren, Maggie Durrant, and Louis McDonald. Rebecca, who is a Staff Sergeant in the Reserves, thought up the idea of the assault course.



Joy Chowdhury during the challenge



The competitors probably wondering why exactly they agreed to the challenge



Mark Brandreth gives it his all during the military challenge



Joy Chowdhury enjoys taking part in the military challenge on the hospital field

'Affront to democracy' claim on refusal to publish report

THE refusal of Shropshire Council to publish an audit investigation into a grant of £80,000 to The New Saints Football Club could be taken as "an affront to democracy", one of those concerned about the award has said.

The comment has come from private investigator Paul Wiseman who has researched the grant on behalf of a group of Shropshire businessmen who approached him six months ago.

He said it appeared that the legacy grant circumvented State Aid regulations that prevent monies from being paid to a limited company.

Apart from £10,000, the money, granted in 2012 and due to be paid back in instalments, remains outstanding.

"The conditions of this grant were that it be named as a legacy grant and repaid, interest free at a rate of £16,000 per year to a third party over a period of five years," he said.

The third party was named as Oswestry Council and the money was granted from the budget of the Market Towns Revitalisation Programme. Mr Wiseman said that on January 17 he wrote to Oswestry Town Council and

asked the town clerk what steps it intended to take to recover the £80,000. He said: "Oswestry Town Council passed on my request to Shropshire Council for clarification. On March 19, I was advised the town council had been told Shropshire Council was taking steps to deal with the matter, but did not specify what those steps were.

"We are now in July and an investigation conducted by Shropshire Council's audit team has presented a report to the council Standards Committee, in closed session. If Shrop-

shire Council continues to refuse to publish this report it will inevitably leave a question mark hanging. The citizens of Shropshire have a right to know how their taxes are spent."

Garth Proffitt for Shropshire Council said: "Shropshire Council's internal auditors have carried out a review of the grant award as part of the Market Towns Revitalisation Programme.

"Their report was considered by Shropshire Council's audit committee in private session. "This is standard practice for such reports."

Firm welcomes 15 new land charge arrangements

ROGER Parry & Partners have welcomed the new Local Land Charges (LLC) Service as it will speed up the property and land sales process in the future.

From Wednesday this week, Her Majesty's Land Registry will launch a new digital Local Land Charges (LLC) Register. After this date LLC searches for property or land will be able to be done directly by companies rather than having to wait for a local authority to provide the information.

Warwick District Council is set to be the first to launch the new Local Land Charges service this week, and then HM Land Registry is working in partnership with up to 26 local authorities in England over 2018 and 2019 to migrate their LLC data to a central, digital register as part of a phased migration approach. Once the data is migrated, companies will be able to get instant online search results via GOV.UK and the other HM Land Registry business customer channels; portal and Business Gateway. Peter Daborn, associate with Roger Parry & Partners, said: "This is great news for our clients as it should speed up the sales process for land and properties in future. We currently have to manage clients' expectations when it comes to the time frame for the sales process. Once this new service is available it should speed up the whole process."

AM will not be standing for leader role

A POLITICIAN has ruled himself out of the running for the Welsh Conservative leadership contest.

Following the resignation of Andrew RT Davies as the Tory leader in the Welsh Assembly, rumours began to circulate about who would be running for the role.

Paul Davies was put in place as interim leader. Montgomeryshire's Tory AM, Russell George, who is a shadow minister in the government, has ruled himself out of the running.

Mr George, who has served since 2011 when he took over from Lib Dem Mick Bates, took to social media to pledge his support for Mr Davies in the leadership contest.

He said: "My Assembly group leader Andrew RT Davies stood down.

"Andrew has been the Welsh Conservative Assembly group leader since 2011 just after I was elected.

"Want to pay tribute to his service as my leader and leader of the opposition. He's made a massive contribution to Welsh politics and is a good friend to Montgomeryshire.

"My colleague Paul Davies was appointed the interim leader today, Paul is good, understands Rural Wales. I will be supporting Paul for leader."

Officer appointed to role in force

A NEW assistant chief constable has been appointed by West Mercia Police.

Geoff Wessell will join the chief officer team with West Mercia Police and Warwickshire Police, from Avon & Somerset Police.

He will become the assistant chief constable for shared policing services, a role which has responsibility protective services, including operations, OCC and criminal justice, as well as the alliance in the region on the regional organised crime unit, strategic roads policing, public order, and firearms.

He said: "I'm proud to be joining two forces known for their professionalism and dedication to protecting people from harm. The values of both forces are very much in line with my own: professionalism, integrity, selflessness and dedicated to the care and protection of the public. I am excited to begin working with our officers, staff and volunteers to deliver the very best service our communities deserve."

Chief Constable of West Mercia Police, Anthony Bangham said: "I am delighted to welcome Geoff to our chief officer team, bringing with him the experience and skills required to best support our two police forces delivering our shared services to the communities we serve."

Peak challenge for fundraisers



Scott and John are training for their challenge by climbing Shropshire's Wrekin

A COUNSELLOR from Hope House Children's Hospice, based at Morda near Oswestry, is climbing the UK's highest peaks to raise funds to help support more children and families.

Scott Reeve from Wem has been a counsellor at Hope House since 2014. He is part of a team that every year helps children, and their brothers and sisters, parents and grandparents, to face life threatening conditions and sudden death.

Scott will be joined by his friend John Maguire, an engineer who also lives in Wem. They are giving themselves just 24 hours to climb Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon starting at daybreak on August 11.

"We want to raise as much money as we can for Hope House and for all the children and families who rely on their services," says Scott.

"I am really proud to work at Hope House. I see it as a real privilege to be here

for people at the worst time of their life and to help provide a space to come and be safe and be heard and understood.

"If this challenge can raise money and also awareness about what Hope House does it would be fantastic."

Hope House and Ty Gobaith provide bereavement support and specialist counselling to families from Shropshire, Cheshire, Mid and North Wales after the death of their child, whether they have previously used the hospice's services or not. They also counsel children who have lost someone close to them suddenly and unexpectedly. More than 400 families are helped every year. It costs £6.3 million every year to provide all of Hope House and Ty Gobaith's care and counselling services - donations make up more than three quarters of the money needed.

To sponsor Scott and John's challenge visit giving.com/fundraising/scottmig2018

Six stalking cases reported on daily basis

THERE were more than six cases of stalking, harassment and malicious communications reported every day in Shropshire last year and almost one per day in Powys.

A total of 2,434 cases were reported throughout Shropshire in 2017, with 332 in Powys, according to new figures.

It is the first time the Office for National Statistics has released police recorded crime data on stalking and harassment on a local district level.

Of the three crimes included in the figures, stalking is by far the most serious, and can include following someone, repeatedly going uninvited to their home and monitoring the use of their phones and computers.

Harm reduction unit and vulnerability inspector for Shropshire and Telford, Mark Reilly, said: "We take stalking and harassment very seriously and know that in some cases, although not all, it can lead to serious harm if the behaviour continues.

"No-one should have to suffer repeated and unwanted attention from anyone and we would always urge anyone who is receiving this to get in contact with us.

"We will listen to their concerns and take appropriate action to make sure they are protected and the behaviour stops."

The release of figures to show crimes related to stalking have been welcomed for highlighting the issue.

But charities say the scale of stalking is unknown as it sometimes gets classified as harassment by police forces.

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust, a charity which cam-

Report by Rory Smith

paigns to reduce the risk of violence and aggression, said: "We welcome the ONS including stalking and harassment in the recorded offences data.

"However, recording stalking and harassment in the same data set does not give a clear indication of the prevalence of these individual, distinct crimes.

"By merging stalking with other crimes, it overlooks the prevalence of them and the significant effect it can have on a victim." In the Telford & Wrekin area, stalking and harassment has increased by 40 per cent over the past two years, from 700 cases in 2015, to 1,157 in 2017.

The Shropshire Council area has seen an increase of 33 per cent, from 851 cases in 2015 to 1,277, and 66 per cent in Powys, from 114 cases to 332.

The ONS says these changes could be down to improved reporting by the police.

Katie Ghose, chief executive of Women's Aid, said: "From our work with survivors, we know that many women experience stalking as part of an ongoing pattern of controlling and abusive behaviour after leaving an abusive partner.

"All too often abuse that does not leave bruises is not taken seriously enough. These acts are often not seen as harmful as physical abuse when isolated yet together they create a life filled with threats, a life lived in fear." Ms Ghose said she was pleased there has been police progress regarding stalking.

"The police have clearly taken steps to improve their identification and recording of this crime with a 33 per cent increase in recorded incidents of stalking and harassment across England and Wales in the last year," she added.

Builder wins contract to create £8 million luxury spa for hotel

BUILDING firm Pave Aways has won the contract for an £8 million project to create a new spa at the Carden Park Hotel near Chester.

A turf-cutting ceremony marked the official start of work on June 25 with the luxury standalone facility scheduled to open in summer 2019, creating a number of new jobs.

The new spa will be the first of its kind in the region and will be in addition to the leisure fa-

cilities currently housed within the hotel. It will feature indoor and outdoor thermal facilities to make the most of the private gardens on the 1,000-acre Cheshire site.

Indoor facilities will include 14 treatment rooms, a champagne beauty lounge, large vitality pool, ice fountain, snow shower, experience showers, foot baths and heated loungers.

Pave Aways, which is based near Oswestry, is delivering the

scheme in partnership with HB Architects from Rugby, structural and drainage engineers Betts Associates from Sealand, Flintshire, spa consultant Nicki Kurran and Glasgow based Barr & Wray Interior Design.

Steven Owen, managing director of Pave Aways, said: "We are delighted to have won the tender to deliver this prestigious scheme at Carden Park.

"This is an incredibly exciting project."

Safety improvements agreed for show week

SAFETY and welfare improvements will be introduced in and around this year's Royal Welsh Show following a wide-ranging review and recommendations.

The improvements have been recommended by an event safety action group established following the death of Montgomery farmer James Corfield at last year's show.

The safety group includes key organisations, such as Powys County Council, all emergency services, the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society, Builth Wells Town Council, Penmaenau Farm, Wales YFC, event organisers, local councillors and volunteers, working together to improve the safety and welfare of people in the area during the week of the Royal Welsh Show

Among the features are a new Green Route path from the Builth Wells town to the Royal Welsh Showground, Penmaenau Farm and campsite and the YFC Young People's Village.

The path will be clearly sign-posted from the town to the various venues using new finger-post signs and green footprints.

Details about the route will be highlighted on a new local map and will be featured along with other show visitor information via the Royal Welsh Show app, available to download for free from the App store and Google Play.

Existing public footpaths in the area will not be closed during the event and stewards will be on-hand at night to help direct show visitors from the town to the venues.

Improved welfare facilities include the introduction of street pastors who will operate in the town in the run-up to the show week and through the four days of the event.

Supported by staff from Powys County Council youth service, they will be based at the former Tourist Information Centre which will be used as a welfare base at night.

A new temporary fence, funded by the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society, will be erected between the Groe and the river to help improve safety. The fence will be put in place before the show and removed after the event.

The Welsh Ambulance Service are also committing additional resources to the area, including a 4x4 joint response vehicle.

16 Minister gives praise to work of railway group

Oswestry & Border Chronicle Thursday, July 12, 2018

THE Welsh minister for tourism has praised a railway near Oswestry for continuing to expand its service.

Lord Elis Thomas visited Llangollen Railway recently to see the progress volunteers are making in extending the service to Corwen.

The station development team gave the minister an escorted visit around the works site. He was shown the major civil engineering work which is creating a new build terminus station for the Dee Valley's heritage railway. Aside from the continuing work to create a new island platform, the minister was able to see the newly installed water tank which has been built locally to modern standards and connects to an environmentally friendly borehole.

Members of the railway told the minister that a major push was needed to complete the station in time for an opening in 2019. It will mean trains from Llangollen can terminate close to the town centre of Corwen rather than the currently temporary platform. Project manager Richard Dixon-Gough said: "We were delighted with the opportunity to welcome the minister and show him the substantial progress that has been made with the building of the new platform which has received 80 per cent grant aid funding from the European Rural Development Fund for Wales."

New rail boss signals her future aims

THE new chairman of the Llangollen Railway Trust says she hopes to drive the railway forward to enhance facilities and gain more revenue.

Liz McGuinness has replaced Peter Lund who stepped down after three years in the post. She has been a volunteer on the heritage railway for seven years and serves on the board as commercial director. She was appointed the railway's general manager in September 2017 and in April she took on the revised role of business manager.

She said: "I anticipate the challenge of leading the Llangollen Railway onward as we prepare to open our new terminus at Corwen. I am proud and excited to be part of Llangollen Railway."

"The volunteers and staff are a great bunch of people and they have achieved some fabulous things so far."

"I want to work with everyone to continue to drive the railway forward to enhance the facilities and earn more revenue."

"This is vital for the prosperity of Llangollen Railway as a major tourist attraction in the Dee Valley."

"The railway is a significant part of the local economy and I will work with local businesses, Denbighshire Tourism and the Countryside Services to further enhance our visitor experience. The opening of Corwen Station will be a major achievement and will give visitors to North Wales greater access to Llangollen and the Dee Valley area of outstanding natural beauty via the trains."

Tasty treats on offer at festival

FOOD and drink lovers are once again in for a tasty treat in Oswestry this weekend.

The 12th Oswestry Food and Drink Festival will be held on the town centre streets on Saturday and Sunday.

The festival offers the best of local produce and each year attracts thousands of people, bringing a boost to the town and local businesses.

This year the festival will run from 10am to 4pm on both Saturday and Sunday.

Organisers say they have lined up the biggest ever street feast in Oswestry's history and are encouraging people to come along and enjoy all that is on offer.

The organisers said: "It's probably the most chilled food festival on the planet with a great atmosphere and properly local."

"Why wouldn't we be local when we have some of the best food and drink producers in the country on our doorstep?"

"We should celebrate that and we do. "On foot is the very best way to arrive at the festival for those who live nearby or who fancy a hike which ends at a delightful festival where the delicious fayre will stand you in good stead for the hike back."

MPs in region offer support to embattled Prime Minister in midst of Brexit crisis

By Dominic Robertson

ble to try and put a date on these matters". Mr Paterson is considered influential, as a former minister who wants a hard Brexit.

Other MPs in the region backed Mrs May following the resignations of Brexit Secretary David Davis, Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson and MP Chris Green.

Robust

They included Wrekin MP Mark Pritchard who, following her Commons speech, praised her "robust performance".

He added: "Two resignations disruptive to government – but certainly not catastrophic."

However, one high-profile county Conservative pulled no punches in his call for Mrs May to step down. Former Shropshire Council leader Keith Barrow, a former Oswestry councillor, has threatened to leave the party if Mrs May does not step down, adding: "I think she absolutely has to go. Everything she said, including 'Brexit means Brexit', she has given away."

Earlier Ludlow MP Philip Dunne, Telford MP Lucy Allan, Shrewsbury & Atcham MP Daniel Kawczynski, and Montgomeryshire MP Glyn Davies had all offered support or sympathy for the Prime Minister. Glyn Davies said anyone considering a leadership challenge should think again. He said: "I think anyone who is thinking about a potential leadership

challenge should go and buy themselves a coffee and think about new ways of supporting the prime minister. David Davis has resigned and been replaced by a highly competent MP, Dominic Raab. I have known Dominic for quite a while and he should have been in a leading cabinet position a long time ago."

Message

"The real message is that in parties, as in most of life no one is irreplaceable and when one minister walks out someone replaces them and in a week it will just be a quiz question. There is a huge amount of excitement but with anything very serious where opinion is divided in a party and the country a resignation is not surprising at all."

More delays expected with A5 roadworks around town

Report by Sue Austin

DRIVERS face more hold-ups on the roads around Oswestry with another set of overnight traffic lights and closures.

Improvement work has started on the busy Mile End roundabout where the A5 merges with the A483 near Oswestry.

And work has also started which has brought a fortnight of overnight closures on part of the Gledrid roundabout on the same trunk road at Chirk.

Motorists have been beset by road closures, traffic lights and signals on the Oswestry bypass for the last three months, primarily on the junction of the A483 with the industrial estate and Maesbury Road.

The work is part of a £9.3 million project to improve roads for new homes being built.

However, the Maesbury Road work to put traffic lights on the staggered junction has, local businesses say, hit their finances.

Residents of the village of Morda say their local roads have also taken the brunt of drivers seeking rat-runs to avoid the roadworks.

Widen

That work and the new work at Mile End, to widen the approach from the north, is due to end on Friday next week.

Tony Bacon from Highways England, said: "Works will involve overnight traffic management. During the day the management will be removed."

"The traffic management for the A483 will continue during the day until July 20 when the scheme is due to end."

Highways England has also published an order for work five miles north on the Gledrid Roundabout.

Workmen will be carrying out routine maintenance and resurfacing on the roundabout between the turnings for Weston Rhyn and Chirk.

There will be a 24-hour speed restriction on the roads leading to the traffic island and overnight closure between 8pm and 6pm.

Work on the Oswestry bypass has been funded by the Government's new housing financial pot.

The Western Shropshire Interchange Improvements will allow Oswestry's southern urban extension to go ahead, with about 750 houses planned.

Whittington roundabout will also be improved and a new roundabout on Shrewsbury Road going into Oswestry, will be built.

Lorraine delighted with Health Hero award



Lorraine Watkins receives the Health Hero award from chief executive Mark Brandreth, watched by colleagues at the hospital

THE latest Health Hero award at Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital has gone to a healthcare assistant for her commitment to patient care.

Lorraine Watkins was nominated for the award by four of her colleagues in the urology team.

One of those was Dr Stuart Bowdler who said: "I am always especially impressed by how good Lorraine is at talking to and reassuring patients, which is a difficult quality to teach

but hugely important from my point of view as an anaesthetist."

Her award was presented to her by Mark Brandreth, chief executive, and Lorraine said: "I'm so overwhelmed to have been named as the latest Health Hero."

"I absolutely love working on the urology list so to have been nominated by the rest of the team really means a lot to me."

"We work so well together as a team and I

definitely couldn't do my job without them so a huge thank you to them all."

Mr Brandreth added: "From Lorraine's reaction when I presented her with the award, it was clear to me how much it meant to her."

"Lorraine's commitment to our patients is an inspiration to us all."

"The respect she has from her colleagues comes across loud and clear in her nominations."

Hospice's shops win best in country title in competition

A CHARITY'S shops have been recognised as being the best in the country after they beat thousands of others in a national competition.

Severn Hospice, which cares for people in Shropshire and Mid Wales living with a terminal illness, was named Outstanding Charity Retailer of the Year by the sector's Retail Association.

The charity, which last year cared for more than 2,000 people at its hospices in Telford and Shrewsbury and through its Hospice at Home programme, uses its 25 shops to raise more

than £1 million a year towards its work. Severn Hospice retail manager, Ross Henderson, said: "This really is the highest prize in charity retailing, I am so proud of the team, and especially when you consider the other charities we were pitted against."

"We are not on 25 high streets to win awards but to raise funds for care that means so much to families in Shropshire and Mid Wales and I am absolutely thrilled that work has been recognised by the judges." Charity Retail Association CEO, Robin Osterley, said: "We are

delighted for Severn Hospice and its shops team. The award category is our flagship one, and Severn Hospice has proved to the judging panel that their charity shops are some of the best in the UK. Congratulations."

Severn Hospice has shops around the county and Mid Wales including in Telford, Ironbridge, Shifnal, Wellington, Madeley, Church Stretton, Craven Arms, Shrewsbury, Welshpool, Llanidloes, Cleobury Mortimer, Wem and Bayston Hill.

The award was made to the hospice based

on a number of reasons including giving more control to staff and volunteers, ensuring that members of staff could progress in their careers, recruiting more volunteers, connecting with local communities and working with providers to bring in an additional £10,000 profit in just five months.

The awards for 2018 were held at Colwick Hall Hotel, Nottingham as part of the association's annual conference and exhibition.

It is estimated that there are around 10,500 charity shops in the UK and Northern Ireland.

Eyes down over the summer for some Book Bingo

BOOK lovers are being invited to explore new reading genres over the summer months at their local library with a Book Bingo promotion which could see them pick up a prize too.

Those participating are encouraged to read a book from each square on a bingo type bookmark provided by their local library. Each square suggests a new genre to choose and read. The librarian ticks off the relevant square once that book has been finished. When the card is full the reader will be entered into a prize draw.

Aundrea O'Neill from Llanfair Caereinion near Welshpool said: "Book Bingo encourages you to read materials from each of six categories. So, reading glasses at the ready, I took up the challenge and I can honestly say I enjoyed every minute of what turned out to be a great literary adventure. I read translated books, local authors, poetry, prize winning fiction. I downloaded borrow box which I am now addicted to and which opens up yet more reading options and even talking books. I learnt more about local history, and language and I fell

in love with Dylan Thomas all over again. It seemed like a small challenge, but it opened up a huge world of fiction."

Another avid reader, Bernadette Willis, a recent participant from Newtown, said: "The whole challenge of Book Bingo has been an interesting experience, pushing me to read beyond my comfort zone, but in particular, the discovery of the e-audio books has opened up new horizons."

The choices offered are books translated from another language, reading a prize win-

ning book, a book turned into a movie, e-books, poetry or a book from a local author. These are available in local libraries or at www.powys.gov.uk/libraries where they can be downloaded onto a computer device or held for collection.

Cllr Myfanwy Alexander, portfolio holder for education at Powys County Council as well as a successful local author, recently visited Newtown library to talk about writing novels and said: "This scheme challenges residents to find out more about the treasures available to read in their local library."

Caryl spreads farm message



Welsh farmer Caryl Hughes has featured in a prestigious Belgian food magazine

FOODIES in Belgium are reading all about what it takes to be a female Welsh livestock producer thanks to a young farmer from near Oswestry.

Leading young farmer Caryl Hughes from the Ceiriog Valley has featured in a prestigious Belgian cooking magazine telling readers the story of Welsh lamb and Welsh farming.

Caryl farms in Llanarmon Dyffryn Ceiriog with her family, who have farmed for generations. Earlier in the spring she represented not only the Welsh sheep industry but also female farmers across the country when she helped Hybu Cig Cymru – Meat Promotion Wales (HCC) put PGI Welsh lamb on the Belgian culinary scene in Culinaire Ambiance magazine.

HCC has worked for many years to successfully establish Welsh lamb as a premium product in Belgium.

The photos accompanying the article show off the stunning Ceiriog Valley where

Caryl's farm is located, highlighting Wales's breath-taking scenery and the natural surroundings in which Welsh lamb is reared. Also in the feature are two PGI Welsh lamb recipes for inspired readers to try out at home, created by the Belgian Lady Chef of the Year.

In the article, Caryl explains what it's like to be a woman carving out a career in a traditionally male-dominated industry and how sheep reared in Wales take advantage of the dramatic and luscious Welsh landscape. She said: "Being a female never put me off pursuing a career in farming."

"Farming is a way of life; it is in my blood and I feel very proud to be a part of this industry."

"I was very happy to take part in the interview and to use it as an opportunity to promote Welsh Lamb and highlight the traditional farming practices and high levels of animal welfare that we have here in Wales."

Anger as plea to change court system ignored

SOLICITORS have spoken of their anger as calls for a U-turn on "farcical" court changes were ignored.

Crisis talks were held after remand hearings were moved from Shropshire to Kidderminster Magistrates Court.

The changes have led to long journeys for legal staff, police and witnesses.

Defendants who miss the one daily police bus to Kidderminster end up being locked up for 24 hours in a police cell.

Solicitors were hopeful they could persuade officials to move the hearings back to Telford Magistrates Court – but have been told that the new arrangements must stay in place.

Stephen Scully, a solicitor with Lanyon Bowdler, said: "We are without exception disappointed."

"We were hoping they would have had a rethink but now it will go on for another three to six months and people will suffer until they review it again."

"We were hoping the fact that they had sat round the table with us would mean they would look at all the problems we have raised and realise the system was not working and work with us."

"But now we feel that even though we told them it is not working they just want to carry on and the problems we have raised during the initial stages are not going away."

There have been a number of criticisms of the new arrangements, with people arrested after 9am now likely to be held until the following day when they are taken to Kidderminster by bus for a hearing.

Critics, including unnamed magistrates, branded the system a "farce".

Report by Dominic Robertson

They say police time is being wasted and vulnerable defendants freed by the courts are being left miles from their homes with no transport.

The courts service insists the changes were made to "improve waiting times for victims and witnesses" and will remain pending further meetings.

The decision to continue with the system has been taken by the Midlands Judicial Business Group (JBG).

In a note posted to court users the group confirmed there would be regular meetings to assess the system and a future review.

The first meeting will take place on July 24, it has been announced.

The note said: "The JBG determined that the centralised remand court should continue to operate at this time."

"It will be subject to further review in the future. In the meantime, Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service will continue working with other agencies and court users to gather evidence about the operation of the centralised court to inform such review."

"It is intended to hold regular professional court user groups to which will be invited all those with a professional interest in the hearing of remand cases across the area."

"Such meetings will seek to address in a timely fashion any matters which are raised which can improve day to day operations of the current system."

"They are also intended to identify viable alternative solutions to the current centralised court which might cross local justice area or cluster boundaries."

Application submitted for the building of egg production unit

ANOTHER planning application has been submitted to build a free range egg production unit.

The application has been submitted to Powys County Council's planners by Alun and Helen Bennett who want to build the unit to house 32,000 chickens at Cyniwyll in Llanerfyl near Welshpool.

The plans are for the unit, and on top of that for an office, service area and egg store. The eggs will then be collected from

the site three times a week with three deliveries of feed a month to the site and the applicants have said there will be no effect on the road network from these movements. It is another farm in the area to go into this line of the industry, as farmers move to diversify. A large number of applications for egg production units have been submitted to the local authority over the last two years, with a number now being constructed and others already

built. In the consultation replies sent to Powys County Council the local Llanerfyl Community Council said that councillors unanimously voted for the application to be refused.

In a letter to planners, the council said it had serious concerns regarding the road safety on the A458 with an increase of heavy goods vehicles.

The application is expected to go before the council's planning committee later this year.

Health staff achievements to be recognised

THE achievements of staff and volunteers at a Shropshire health trust will be celebrated in a special awards ceremony.

The annual Values In Practice (VIP) awards held by The Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust (SaTH) will this year take place in one of the hangars at RAF Cosford and will be themed to tie in with the national NHS70 celebrations – marking 70 years of the National Health Service.

The NHS was founded in July 1948 and SaTH, which runs the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital and the Princess Royal Hospital in Telford, has been marking the occasion throughout the year, beginning with a BigTea tea party for volunteers.

The trust's NHS70 celebrations will culminate with the staff

celebration at RAF Cosford on September 28. Nominations are being invited in eight categories.

The categories are patient experience award, behind the scenes award, rising star award, team of the year, volunteer of the year, improvement of the year, inspirational leader of the year and learner of the year.

Simon Wright, chief executive at SaTH, said: "Every day across our hospital, we see remarkable acts from individuals and teams, and this is our small way of saying thank you."

"This year, as we mark 70 years of the NHS, it is even more important that we recognise the dedication, devotion and care that our people display in what we all know can be very trying

circumstances. I am delighted that RAF Cosford have agreed to allow us to hold the event in one of their hangars."

"This fantastic setting, amongst some wonderful historic aircraft, will certainly add to the sense of occasion for all the finalists."

"The nominations we have received in previous years have been incredible, and it has been a very hard task to choose the winners."

"I have absolutely no doubt that this year, we will again receive some exceptional nominations."

Nominations can be made via the Values in Practice website at awards.sath.nhs.uk

Companies are urged to use filming fund

FILM and TV companies in Shropshire are being urged to make the most of a £2 million fund to help put the Midlands on the big screen.

The West Midlands Production Fund has £2.1 million available to invest in the production of feature length films and high-end TV dramas from companies based in the area as well as producers looking to establish a base to film in the region.

The fund – run by Creative England and set up with the support of the European Regional Development Fund – has already helped support a number of award-winning films, including the Bafta-nominated *The Girl with all the Gifts*. Marches Growth Hub business support officer Yasmin Sulaman said the fund represented an excellent opportunity for filmmakers across Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. She said: "This fund has a terrific track record of supporting the creative industry regionally and helping get some fantastic films onto the big screen."

"As well as helping back *The Girl with all the Gifts* a couple of years ago, it has also helped support a number of other award-winning films and popular TV programmes such as the BBC dramas *Hustle* and *Line of Duty*."

For details of the guidelines and how to apply visit creativeengland.co.uk

Views are sought over plans strategy

RESIDENTS in Powys are being asked for their views on three sets of guidance that will be used to support the county's newly adopted local development plan.

Earlier this year the county council adopted a new LDP, the plan that sets out planning policies for the county outside of the Brecon Beacons National Park, with a commitment that it would produce three Supplementary Planning Guidance policies. The supplementary policies, which will go out for public consultation for six weeks later this month, will cover affordable housing, planning obligations and biodiversity and geodiversity.

SPG assists in the understanding, interpretation and application of certain policies in making planning decisions and it helps ensure that those policies are better understood and applied effectively. It provides helpful advice for planning officers, developers and site owners alike.

The council is producing them in line with the programme agreed with the independent planning inspector who conducted the public examination during 2017 to ensure that the adopted LDP is effective in managing the development of land to facilitate sustainable development.

Consultation ends at 5pm on Tuesday, August 21.

Archives could go on public display

A PUBLIC exhibition of some of Oswestry's archives could go on display next year.

The town council's archives, which include a letter signed by Oliver Cromwell, have recently been given national recognition. The National Archive Service praised the work done by archivists. Mayor Sandy Best said she was totally delighted with the award and said it was well deserved.

She said that looking ahead to the future she hoped that the council would look to what help could be given to the archiving of digital records and their management, whether monetary or training.

Arren Roberts, assistant town clerk, said: "This is why we are keen to join the West Midlands archives group to access its training and advice."

Councillor Chris Schofield asked if the council would consider a public exhibition.

He said: "I don't think people realise what is in our archives, we even have Cromwell's signature."

Town Clerk David Preston said that items chosen for an exhibition would have to be very carefully picked.

He said: "Many items will never be able to leave the archives because of the age and the conditions they have to be kept in."

Councillors agreed to look to put on an exhibition next year.

18 Councillor calls for new hospital facility

Oswestry & Border Chronicle Thursday, July 12, 2018

A POLITICIAN has called for a new integrated hospital in Mid Wales's largest town and a 24-hour ambulance station as part of a hospital consultation.

In response to the NHS Future Fit and the separate Hywel Dda Health Board consultations, Plaid Cymru's Powys councillor Elwyn Vaughan said Montgomeryshire needs a range of health services closer to the county.

He has called for a range of actions to be taken for the benefits of residents in north Powys. He believes the emergency care unit should be in Shrewsbury and there should be more easier transport between Newtown and Shrewsbury.

He said: "At present the nearest PCi units for the treatment of stroke victims are at Bodelwyddan, Wolverhampton or Swansea.

"Bearing in mind the need to arrive at these specialist units within 1.5 hours then it is imperative that we get a unit based in Mid Wales.

"This development combined with the other proposals as highlighted would be a positive development for Powys and ensure that we have parity of service with the rest of Wales."

He also wants to see a 24 hour ambulance station in Llanidloes and a new integrated hospital in Newtown.

Animal charity is kept busy with rescues

RSPCA Cymru rescued more than 8,000 animals last year including pets, farm animals and wildlife.

New figures have shown more rescues were completed by the RSPCA over the year than in both 2016 and 2015, with the figure marking a 7.6 per cent increase on the previous calendar year. Rescues completed by the charity include 4,919 wild animals, and that figure includes hundreds of Manx shearwater birds rescued in West Wales following stormy weather conditions. The nature of frontline work to support animals was again diverse – with other featured rescues including the breaking up of a three-tonne boulder to save a seal in Port Talbot, and a kitten rescued after becoming wedged between two walls in Neath.

Data also shows the emphasis placed by RSPCA Cymru on utilising non-statutory welfare and improvement notices to prevent animal suffering, and improve standards, across the country. These offer advice to people on observing good practice in caring for an animal – with their prevalence in 2017 with 6,678 issued in Wales – highlighting that for the RSPCA, "prevention and education is always the priority". The Annual Summary shines a spotlight on the wide-ranging work of the RSPCA in Wales – including the investigation of animal cruelty complaints, rescuing, rehabilitating and rehoming animals, educating children and adults, hosting events, working with the media and campaigning for change.

Citizens' good work rewarded

TWO residents in a north Powys town have been handed good citizen awards by the mayor.

During the recent St Myllin's Day celebrations in Llanfyllin, Mayor Simon Baynes presented Ann Williams and Richard Kretchner with awards on behalf of the town council.

Mrs Williams received a lifetime award for her community work which includes her many years as a town councillor and former mayor.

The award also celebrates Mrs Williams's work with the Patients Participation Group and fundraising for the Welsh Air Ambulance.

She also set up and runs the lunch club for elderly people in Llanfyllin and the surrounding district which meets on a monthly basis and provides a meal and welcome social get together.

Mr Kretchner's award was down to his work with the civic society and role as historian of Llanfyllin.

He and his wife Lynette also lead the team maintaining the wetlands and Cae Bodfach.

Artists urged to honour Wilfred Owen's life and work in new county-wide competition

Report by Lucy Todman

THE poetry of one of Shropshire's most famous sons will be brought to life by artists from around the county in a competition to mark the 100th anniversary of his death.

Run by the Friends of Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery, the competition is open to all Shropshire-based artists to submit work of any medium as part of the Wilfred Owen Centenary Commemorations.

The theme of the competition is Wilfred Owen's poetry.

All entries must be delivered to the museum between noon and 4pm on August 7.

They will be judged by a panel the following day.

The winning artist will be invited to have a full exhibition of their own work in the balcony

space at the museum and will also receive a £300 cash prize.

The runner up and the people's prize winner will each win £250.

All successful artists will have their work displayed in the museum from the launch event on October 25 until January 2019.

Lezley Picton, Shropshire Council Cabinet member for leisure and culture, said: "The Open Art Competition is part of the wider Wilfred Owen 100 festival which includes a variety of exciting events, talks and exhibitions.

"The task for artists is to portray Wilfred Owen's poetry through their work and we're

keen for as many Shropshire-based artists as possible to enter the competition

"Everyone involved with coordinating the competition at Shropshire Council is grateful to the Friends of Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery who are kindly supporting the competition and funding the fantastic prizes.

"We're all excited to see the different ways in which Wilfred Owen's poetry is portrayed by Shropshire's talented artists."

Entry is £20 or £10 for those artists in full-time education. Only one piece can be submitted per artist.

A series of events to commemorate Oswestry-born Wilfred Owen will be held later this year.

There will be a series of events from August

4 to November 11 including ballet, a war film festival, art exhibitions, lectures, guided walks and a concert.

A statue to Wilfred Owen will also be unveiled in Oswestry.

Over the last three years, groups around the county have been working together on a programme of heritage and arts activities to commemorate the centenary of the First World War. The programme has been funded by money from the Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council, England.

For more information about the events scheduled to be held go to shropshireremembers.org.uk.

A specially produced Wilfred Owen brochure will also be available.

Report by Jonny Drury

A CONSULTATION about changes to concessionary car parking for blue badge holders has been extended, Powys County Council has announced.

Blue badge holders, their family members, residents and organisations across the county have until 5pm on Monday next week to make their views known on the proposals. The consultation was due to close on July 2.

Currently, blue badge holders can park all day for free at council owned and operated pay and display car parks.

However, as part of the council's efforts to save £8.5m this financial year, the service is proposing to change this concession to help meet a saving target of £100,000.

Residents will be consulted on a number of options.

Options include having no concession and blue badge holders pay the same amount as anyone else

Another option is for blue badge holders to park in a disabled bay park for free and those who cannot find a disabled bay have to pay to park with no additional concession

Another suggestion is for blue badge holders to pay towards parking but get an extra hour for free on top of the time chosen.

And a further option is for blue badge holders to continue to park for free and the £100,000 savings target found from somewhere else.

Cllr Phyl Davies, cabinet member for highways, said: "This consultation has created a lot of public interest across the county so I have decided to extend the consultation so that it gives people more time to submit their views.

"This is a very difficult time for the council and difficult decisions have to be made. We fully recognise that blue badge holders do have mobility issues and need extra time to park and shop.

"Our preferred option is that a blue badge holder pays towards parking but they will get extra time for free. So, if a blue badge holder pays for two hours, they would actually get three hours parking in total.

"I urge those who blue badge holders, their family members or anyone else to take advantage of the extension. It is important that they make their views known by 5pm on Monday."

To take part in the consultation visit www.powys.gov.uk/haveyoursay or request and return a paper copy via a local library.

Rebecca's service to school is recognised



Rebecca Manford with rotary club president David Davies and chairman of The Marches local governing body Mark Liquorish

EACH year the Rotary Club of Oswestry sponsors an award at The Marches School Speech Day for "Service to the School".

This year's recipient is Hargreaves House captain Rebecca Manford who receives the shield, a certificate and an Amazon gift voucher. As Rebecca will not be present at Speech Day, the award was presented recently at the school by rotary club president David

Davies and chairman of The Marches local governing body Mark Liquorish.

Mr Davies said he was pleased to read the citation prepared by the school which said: "Rebecca has maintained an impeccable record in school. Rebecca has put everything into her role in the student leadership and has attended all events possible to support the school.

"Her dedication will no doubt leave her in

good stead with employers lucky enough to hire her in the future." Congratulating Rebecca, Mr Davies said: "It is rewarding to see young people becoming involved in many aspects of school life.

"They enjoy their school life much more and it is good to know that the school recognises their efforts and will go on and support their future career plans where possible."

Bus users now have more choice of coach operator

BUS users in Oswestry and Chirk have an alternative service linking them with Wrexham.

EasyCoach, part of the easyGroup family of brands, led by billionaire easyJet founder Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou, now services Wrexham and the surrounding area.

Andrew Martin, who is running the Wrexham area service, says one of his routes will give people in Chirk the chance to use a day ticket.

Passengers have complained for more than a year that the Arriva bus service from Chirk

to Wrexham is £6.20 but, if they were to catch the bus from neighbouring Newbridge, it would be £4.20.

Mr Martin says the price on his buses will be £3.50 from Chirk. The service from Oswestry will travel through Gobowen and St Martins before Chirk.

He said "The Wrexham bus service network has fared badly recently, with the closure of two out of three major operators since 2016.

"Having just one dominant operator isn't great for the consumer, so we saw an opening

for an innovative brand that would bring a breath of fresh air to the town. We guarantee fares will always be lower than our main competitor."

EasyCoach launches with four main services. Route 2 operates from Oswestry to Wrexham with the 2D from Wrexham to Cefn-Mawr. Working in tandem, both EasyCoach routes will deliver a service from Plas Madoc, via Ruabon and Johnstown, to Wrexham Bus Station every 15 minutes.

EasyCoach will also reinstate the Wrexham

to Wrexham Industrial Estate bus, operating as route 42. Similarly EasyCoach's new route 44 will offer a service from Wrexham to Barker's Lane at 30-minute intervals.

Mr Martin said: "Getting out of town to the industrial estate, as well as getting into town from residential areas, has been extremely difficult for anyone without a car. EasyCoach is set to change that. Besides cheaper fares, we will also have promos throughout the year, as well as concessions for passengers who are retired or disabled."

Stillbirths level in county still remains 'higher than average'

STILLBIRTHS in Shropshire remain "higher than average" despite changes at the trust running the county's two main hospitals, according to a report.

The review of maternity services was requested by Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust (SaTH) following concerns over perinatal mortality rates – numbers of stillbirths and deaths within the first seven days of birth.

Reports by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) say improvements

have been made but have not reduced the stillbirth rate.

Hospital bosses say providing the best care for women remains a "priority".

A team of RCOG assessors visited the hospital trust in July 2017 where they reviewed records of three serious incidents and interviewed staff and families.

They made a series of recommendations, including calling on the trust to create action plans to address the "higher than average" perinatal mortality rates.

The trust was also recommended to monitor areas, including the transfer of mothers from the consultant-led services to midwife-led ones, and neonatal staffing issues – something it was already looking into.

In a follow-up review in April, the RCOG found all recommendations had been addressed, but the rate of stillbirths had not fallen.

Work is continuing to reduce it.

The report added: "The head of midwifery should be commended on their current leadership style and appears to have pulled the team

together. Despite the continued uncertainty on model of care and site for the consultant-led maternity and neonatal services, the care group remains focused in improving provision of care within the maternity and neonatal services."

SaTH says improvements made by the service have included the introduction of a smoking cessation midwife and "mama wallets" for mothers-to-be.

The wallets help raise awareness among pregnant women of the importance of detecting and reporting reduced fetal movements.

School's recorders boost



Members of Bellan House recorder group with their windfall of recorders try out their new instruments on the steps of the school

TALENTED musical pupils at a school in Oswestry have enjoyed enjoying a recorder windfall.

The preparatory department of Oswestry School, Bellan House, had a visit from Bruce Perrin from local firm Barnes & Mullins.

Bruce is one of the managing directors of the firm.

He and a photographer arrived to take pictures of the school's recorder group.

Barnes & Mullins is the UK distributor for AULOS school recorders.

Every year AULOS produces a calendar that is distributed globally by its distribution partners.

AULOS is a well known American com-

pany which has been making recorders for 54 years.

Each month of the year of the calendar will feature children from schools in different countries playing recorders.

Bruce was asked to locate a school that would be willing to provide a photograph of a music group of pupils playing the recorder.

If chosen, the photograph will be distributed worldwide.

The pictures will be sent to the Tokyo headquarters and photographs for the calendar will be chosen then.

As a reward for taking part AULOS donated 20 descant recorders, three trebles and two tenors worth hundreds of pounds.

Special needs provision is given extra £1m

SERVICES for children and younger people with special needs have received an extra £1 million to tackle increased demand across Shropshire.

The move comes as a new report showed that 40 per cent of requests for children and young people to be assessed for special educational needs (SEN) in Telford & Wrekin were refused last year.

The borough and county councils have each been allocated £500,000 over three years to invest in provision for children.

Authorities must carry out an assessment if a child may have SEN, including autism, and if they require additional support.

Government figures show that in Telford in 2017 there were 231 requests for assessment and of those 191 education, health and care (EHC) plans were put in place.

Figures show 51 families in Shropshire who had an agreement for extra help were not given a new EHC when they requested it last year.

Telford & Wrekin Council spokesman Russell Griffin said: "Children and young people, aged up to 25, with special educational needs and or disabilities are identified through educational settings with the majority receiving help via early intervention. Our approach is to get the right support in place at the right time and Telford and Wrekin have created new procedures so that funding is more readily available for those with the most complex of needs. Work with schools over the last year on a clear pathway, where formal assessment may be required, has improved the quality of information that the local authority receives, so that it

Report by Deborah Hardiman

is better able to determine whether an assessment for an education, health and care plan is necessary. Last year Telford & Wrekin Council was recognised as making good improvements to the outcomes and services for those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities during an Ofsted or CQC local area inspection."

Jayne Stevens, of Telford's Parent Opening Doors, said families often feel frustrated when there is a lack of information. She said: "Our main role is to work on behalf of the family to raise what is important to the family to the local authority and we challenge when necessary."

Shropshire Council spokeswoman Maria Jones said: "Shropshire Council continues to be committed to ensuring all children in Shropshire receive the best possible education in our county and have the opportunity to reach their full potential."

"The local authority has a very strong record of supporting children and young people with special educational needs to maximise their achievement and work closely with the young people and their parents to deliver the best outcomes for them."

"If a statement of SEN has not been converted to an EHCP it is because the child or young person no longer requires the level of SEN support that an EHCP would provide."

"No child or young person has been denied an EHCP because of a funding issue."

"The majority of young people identified as needing an EHCP who are transitioning from school to college or other education or training setting, either have a plan in place or are in the process of having their special educational needs assessed."

Backlog in surgeries flagged up in report to health bosses

THE urology department serving Shropshire has reported "workforce constraints" and a backlog in routine surgery.

In a report to Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust's (SaTH's) board, Carol McInnes, assistant chief operating officer for unscheduled care, said: "The increased demand in cancer continues to have a significant impact on our ability to manage benign urology pathways."

"Routine surgery is being

delayed and in some instances cancelled to allow us to free up theatre sessions for urgent cancer surgery."

"The outpatient follow up backlog has also increased as appointments are displaced to accommodate new patients."

The report also says prostate cancer surgery is dependent on a single surgeon.

Measures are being taken to address issues, such as securing additional theatre sessions to

bring urgent surgery dates forward and additional support for the clinical nurse specialist team.

The trust's action plan states it intends to identify the number of backlog patients that can be treated in the independent sector and secure agreements to do so. Bosses will also consider employing a locum to assist with the backlog clearance and the job description for a general urologist is being updated to advertise and test the market.

Quarter of missing are mentally ill

THE number of people with mental health problems that go missing each year is disturbing, according to Shropshire Mind.

More than a quarter of all people reported missing to West Mercia Police in 2017 had a diagnosed mental illness.

Last year 2,186 missing persons reports were filed and of those, 623 people were known to have a mental health flag on their record.

The manager of Shropshire Mind, Heather Ireland, said: "These figures are disturbing but not surprising given the number of people who use our service. On a daily basis we support approximately 40 people within Shropshire Mind, via email and telephone and this figure is ever increasing." The charity, based in Shrewsbury, provides a diverse range of quality services across the county for the one in four people and their families acknowledged to be affected by mental or emotional distress. "We want to prevent somebody going missing by having the right resources with immediate access for any person within Shropshire," Mrs Ireland said.

"It is because of this increase that the Shropshire Sanctuary was commissioned. It has been operational since last June to provide immediate support to a person with their poor mental health in a time of crisis, out of hours."

Estate agents are bucking national trend

ESTATE agents in Shropshire say they are bucking a national trend that saw 150 firms become insolvent in the last year.

Pressure from online rivals continues to cause a problem for the industry, a new study has revealed.

The UK total of agent failures was only five more than the previous year, but thousands of firms are currently showing signs of financial distress, said accountants Moore Stephens.

But estate agents covering Shropshire and Mid Wales believe they are bucking the trend thanks to their more traditional approach.

The study found bigger estate agents are feeling the strain just as much as smaller firms as they have higher staffing and property costs than companies trading online, said the report.

But in contrast, one of Shropshire's oldest established agents, Balfours, last month opened a boutique estate agency in Ludlow.

Alistair Hilton, head of sales, said: "The study is a national picture and no-one should brush the whole market together – the regional market has always been a very different model."

"We have an ever-growing pool of clients and repeat clients in Shropshire."

Waste site bid in step forward

AN application to build a new council waste bulking facility and business units has been submitted by a local authority.

Powys County Council has submitted a joint application with its planning department to build a recycling bulking facility and business units. It is due to be sited on Abermule Business Park and plans were unveiled last year.

The council purchased the site from the Welsh Government for an unknown fee and it is not known how much the construction of the facilities will cost.

There have been objections to the development with one local resident stating that the size and scale of what is proposed is inappropriate for the area of Abermule. Residents have been against the building of the facility for some time, and a meeting in May saw some residents still upset about the plans.

It is believed an offer was made to the Welsh Assembly to buy the land to develop the site by someone from the village and the offer was rejected before the local authority acquired the land. The meeting in May saw residents question Powys County Council officials, with some stating their concern that the high tech business park that was previously proposed for the land will now just be a waste facility.

Group sees rise in profits and revenue

AGRICULTURAL group Wynnstay has seen a rise in revenue and profits as it delivered its results for the first half of the year.

The firm, which has sites in Shrewsbury and Llansantffraid near Oswestry, said the encouraging results reflect a continuing recovery in farmgate prices across the agricultural sector – and that farmer confidence is returning.

The group saw growth across both its agricultural and retail divisions, and acquired eight stores from the administrators of Countrywide Farmers at the end of April, including the one in Bridgnorth.

Revenue from continuing operations rose by 10.3 per cent to £218.5 million.

Operating profit was up by 15.9 per cent to £5 million, while pre-tax profit also increased by 15.7 per cent to £4.9 million.

Wynnstay said it remains well-positioned to meet current market expectations for the full year.

In its agricultural division, revenue rose 9.9 per cent to £160.1 million, while operating profit was up by 33 per cent to £2 million. The strongest recovery was in feeds, driven by both farmers returning to more typical feeding patterns and the protracted winter.

In its specialist retail division, revenue was up 11.4 per cent to £58.2 million, while operating profit increased by 6.2 per cent to £3.1 million.

Wynnstay Stores benefited from the improved trading backdrop, with like-for-like sales up eight per cent, excluding inflation.

Ken Greetham, chief executive of Wynnstay, is to retire from the group in early July, with Gareth Davies appointed to succeed him.

Mr Greetham said: "Wynnstay's interim results are encouraging, with the group's stronger performance reflecting the long-awaited upturn for the agricultural sector, which started to come through in 2017. The continuing improvement in farmgate prices has boosted farmer confidence, and demand across product categories was higher."

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DAN OWEN

The Shropshire lad whose musical breakthrough has seen him rubbing shoulders with musical royalty in Nashville.

OUTDOORS

Kevin Howells on why England's World Cup campaign has reunited players, coaches and fans behind a common cause.

EVENTS

Comedian Rob Deering answers our 10 questions as Shrewsbury Comedy Festival prepares to click into gear with a double header featuring Lost Voice Guy.

FOOD

Get into the great outdoors and enjoy the social experience of pizza.



REVIEWS

The best places to eat, the picks of what's on television, films heading to Shropshire cinemas, and another great day out comes under the microscope.

PLUS LOCAL NEWS | PICNICS | THE HOME OF THE FUTURE | BREXIT | BOXING IN PRISON | FISHING | DAN NIGHTINGALE | PUZZLES | CHRIS PACKHAM | CARBUNCLES

ON SALE FRIDAY

Converted mill is a spacious home over four floors

A stunning five-bedroomed converted mill with four floors, Penylan Mill, Coed-Y-Go, near Oswestry is for sale through JJ Dell & Co at £590,000.

The mill is located in an idyllic location with countryside views. It is situated on the outskirts of the market town of Oswestry. Penylan Mill has been renovated and extended to create a spacious family home. Having oil fired central heating and double glazing, it briefly comprises an entrance hall, bedroom five, a cloakroom/WC, utility room, living room, breakfast kitchen, sitting room, bedroom two (en-suite) with a Juliette balcony, bedrooms three and four, reception room, master bedroom, dressing room, en-suite and a mezzanine with storage cupboards with far reaching views. Outside, the property is approached down a private drive with parking for numerous vehicles

There are good sized rear gardens laid to lawn with a wealth of flowers, shrubs and trees. There is a wildlife area with a fenced-off pond and a decked terrace with countryside views. There is also a workshop. In more detail the entrance hall has slate tiled flooring, an under stairs storage cupboard and an ash staircase. The cloakroom/WC has slate tiled flooring and the utility room has wooden worktops and space for a washing machine and dryer. The living room has cupboards, wooden flooring, under floor heating and bi-folding doors opening out to the patio. The ash staircase rises from the entrance hall into the breakfast kitchen. The breakfast kitchen includes a central island with storage, a range style cooker, space for an American-style fridge/freezer, integrated dishwasher, exposed beams, five windows and French doors leading out to a decked terrace and onto rear gardens.

The sitting room has a feature exposed brick wall, a log burner on a slate hearth, exposed beams, and French doors with a 'Juliette' balcony.

On the second floor stairs lead to the third floor and there is a door with stairs down to the decked terrace and gardens.

KEY FEATURES

Converted mill

Five bedrooms

Four floors

Three reception rooms

Breakfast kitchen and utility

COED-Y-GO

£590,000



TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

AGENT: JJ Dell & Co

TEL: 01691 653437

EMAIL: property@jldell.co.uk



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17th century home offers highly flexible accommodation

HOPE
£725,000

Little Hope, at Hope, Leighton near Welshpool is a 17th century cottage that has undergone a large extension.

Currently run as a bed and breakfast business, its flexible layout means it also provides for two co-habiting families, with separate quarters. In a design which flows with exceptional clarity and focus as a property with an option for two halves, it is for sale through Balfours at £725,000.

The main cottage comprises a porch, a large sitting room with an inglenook fireplace, woodburner and French doors. Adjacent is the library with glazing and views to two aspects and the study – a cosy hideaway. The morning room is the central point of the ground floor from which the stairs ascend to three bedrooms and a family bathroom. Beyond the morning room, the dining room is partially open plan to the kitchen, achieving a fabulous social space



with sleek contemporary fixtures in the kitchen. A second study, cloakroom/WC and utility complete the ground floor accommodation.

Duncan Scobie of Balfours, said: "Evelyn and Mike Gregory have nurtured Little Hope to create a fresh and spacious home, together with a highly successful bed and breakfast business. The latter is run as Long Mountain Bed and Breakfast, which has received many awards and certificates of excellence, from Visit Wales and Trip Adviser. The guest accommodation reflects this, it provides three spacious double bedrooms, one with an en-suite bathroom and the other two with en-suite shower rooms. A large guest dining/lounge spanning nearly six metres square and an independent guest kitchen allow the guest accommodation to be run totally separately; or for an extended family to enjoy."

Contact Balfours on 01743 353511.



Stunning farmhouse enjoys superb views over valley

LLANRHAEADR
£400,000 >>>

Clynog, Llanrhaeadr Ym Mochnant near Oswestry is a stunning Grade II listed farmhouse in an elevated position.

It is for sale through Bowen Son & Watson at £400,000.

The property is situated on the outskirts of the picturesque village of Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant close to the confluence of the rivers Tanat and Rhaeadr in the stunning Berwyn Mountains and near Pistyll Rhaeadr.

The property has a reception hall, music room, sitting room, dining room, kitchen lounge, kitchen, utility room, rear lobby, coal house, gallery landing, a loft storage room, integral garage, gun room, five first floor bedrooms, a family bathroom, five attic rooms, large gardens and an orchard/paddock.

Call Bowen Son & Watson on 01691 652367 for more details about the home or to arrange a viewing.



Detached house with valley views comes with a large decked area

GARTH
£374,950 <<<

An individual detached house with valley views and first floor open plan living, Tyn-Y-Pistyll at Garth, Glyn Ceiriog, comes with a large timber decked area, landscaped gardens and woodland.

It is for sale through Morris Marshall & Poole at £374,950. Briefly the property comes with three bedrooms, a shower room and a bathroom.

A turning timber-built staircase rises up from the entrance hall to the upper level lobby with a tiled floor and external door to the rear.

Access leads through to the living area which has a multi-fuel stove fitted to the slate built fireplace, being dual aspect with a large picture window to the rear and concealed radiators. An open plan approach leads through to the dining/kitchen.

Contact Morris Marshall & Poole on 01691 679595 for more information.

Home occupies quiet elevated cul-de-sac position in village

PANT £350,000 >>>

Occupying a quiet elevated cul-de-sac position within the village of Pant near Oswestry, 3 Edwards Close is convenient for local facilities such modern primary school, post office and shop, pub and renowned golf club .

3 Edwards Close is on the market through JJ Dell & Co with a guide price of £350,000.

The home is an individually designed detached four bedroomed house.

The property has a spacious entrance hall, living room, dining room, breakfast kitchen, utility and cloakroom. The master bedroom is ensuite and there are three further bedrooms and a family bathroom. The property has a double garage and ample parking.

There are gardens to the front and a patio and garden to the rear.

For more details contact JJ Dell & Co on 01691 653437.



Perfect country retreat enjoys outstanding views

MOELFRE £595,000

A perfect country retreat, away from the hustle and bustle of life, Y Dafarn at Moelfre, has four bedrooms and outstanding countryside views.

Overlooking Moelfre Lake, it is for sale through Town & Country at £595,000 with no chain. A highly desirable and attractive four bedroom detached family home, it sits in three acres of fields and gardens. Its accommodation briefly comprises a reception room, a living room, a shower room, a kitchen/breakfast room, a laundry, an orangery, a study, a master bedroom with an en-suite, three further bedrooms and a bathroom. To the outside there are beautiful gardens leading to the lake, tandem and double garages, ample off-road parking, outbuildings and a sun terrace. Its elegant entrance hallway has a stone fireplace (not working), part panelled walls, a beam and stairs off. The sitting room has a beamed ceiling, a brick fireplace with an oil fired stove and alcove cupboards. The shower room is a fantastic luxury space with a tiled floor, wash hand basin on vanity unit, WC, walk-in shower with a Triton shower unit, a luxury ceiling mounted air body dryer,



a vanity mirror and a beamed ceiling. The kitchen/ breakfast room is the beautiful heart of the home. A farm-style kitchen open plan to the living room, it has wooden flooring, free-standing units, a ceramic sink with a mixer tap, a stainless steel oven, a microwave, an induction hob, under-floor heating, plumbing for a dishwasher and a window to the front. Stairs lead off to the first floor. There is access to an attic above the kitchen with a pull down ladder. This is boarded and has lighting. There is also a pantry with a ceramic sink, cold slabs, a beamed ceiling and old pub stone steps. The living room has wooden flooring, under-floor heating, two windows to the side and a storage room off.

Contact Town & Country on 01691 679631.



Detached Victorian period family home has large garden

OSWESTRY £450,000 <<<

A detached Victorian period family home, Leeswood in Morda Road, Oswestry lies in a popular location within easy walking distance of the town centre.

Coming with a large garden including a former tennis court, it is for sale through Morris Marshall & Poole at £450,000.

The accommodation briefly comprises a porch, entrance hallway, lounge, morning room, sun room, dining room, cloakroom/shower room, five bedrooms, two being en-suite, an impressive main bathroom, three spacious reception rooms, a hand made kitchen and utility room, a driveway, detached garage and gardens.

In more detail the entrance hallway has a herringbone woodblock floor, panelled walls and a traditional spindled staircase.

Contact Morris Marshall & Poole on 01691 679595 for more details and to arrange a viewing.



New venture hoping to become a hit with families

A NEW business venture offering luxury self-catering holiday accommodation has opened in a market town.

Dinham Weir House in Ludlow located on the banks of the River Teme has recently been bought by Rupert Hunt, his wife Jude and their business partner Ed Godrich.

Mr Hunt said: "We have set up a luxury top-quality family accommodation which is self-catering with the option of hiring chefs and other staff if that is what the visitor wants."

"Jude and I and Ed have lived in Ludlow for many years. It is a wonderful place to live and attracts an incredible amount of tourists every year."

"We have six bedroom suites, all en-suite with their own living areas. Dinham Weir House sleeps a minimum of 12 and is an ideal location for group or family holidays."

"Ed and I run Godrich Interiors based in London, a high-end interiors company that was launched in 2003, so we have taken on the design ourselves and have fitted to top specifications with the emphasis very much on high class and luxury."

"This is an excellent opportunity for us and we are absolutely delighted to have been able to acquire such a beautiful property in the picturesque surroundings that Ludlow offers."

"Ludlow welcomes thousands of visitors every year from all over the world. It is one of the top tourist attractions and there is a real buzz about the place."

"We believe this makes it an excellent location to invest in and that its appeal to visitors will only increase in the years ahead."

"Everything has gone really well with the sale and refurbishment and I would like to thank Gosia of Lanyon Bowdler who was excellent throughout and really helpful."

Gosia Bronisz-Handley, of Lanyon Bowdler, said: "I am very proud to be a part of Lanyon Bowdler's commercial and agricultural property team, and we were all thrilled to have had the opportunity of assisting Rupert, Jude and Ed in their exciting new project."

Two businesses will move at former dairy

DEVELOPERS behind plans for more than 100 new homes at a former creamery hope to improve the design by moving two business units at the site.

Proposals to build 111 dwellings on the former Dairy Crest plant in Crudington near Telford were given the green light three years ago.

Now builder Shropshire Homes Ltd is applying to Telford & Wrekin Council's planners to move the location of existing commercial units from the front to the rear of the site.

The design includes the creation of public open space, car parking, a play area, landscaping and high-way improvements.

A new council planning report includes a request from the developer to vary the scheme.

Shropshire Homes's land manager Andrew Sheldon said: "Our very strong view is that the commercial units are not located in the correct place. As you will appreciate in order for a housing development to be delivered, saleability of the properties being constructed is absolutely critical."

"Our view is that it is vitally important to create an attractive entrance to the site to maximise the saleability of the development."

"The approved location of the commercial units at the site entrance seriously undermine the attractiveness of the whole development both visually and due to the perception of potential purchasers of noise from vehicles from visitors and deliveries."

He adds that the revised positioning of the units will make them less intrusive than the current location.

The approved plans were subject to the developer signing an agreement to make financial payments to benefit the local community, which has now been done.

Demi steps out into digital marketing



Demi Lee with Aida

A SHROPSHIRE woman has taken the step to launch her own digital marketing agency.

Demi Lee, 24, is the founder of Storrie and Day, specialising in providing digital solutions to start-ups and fully established brands.

Born in Shrewsbury and educated in Bridgnorth, Demi started her career as an apprentice in the creative industry seven years ago.

"I was determined to pursue a profession in design - undergoing my apprenticeship at the same time as taking my A-levels at Bridgnorth Endowed School, so working part-time in the day and catching up on

my studies in the evening," she explained.

Demi has since gained wide experience in the sector, being employed by a large Shropshire consultancy and then a London-based branding agency as a digital designer.

"After working with a variety of clients for the past year, ranging from cosmetic specialists to house builders, I decided the time was right to launch my own agency," she said.

"Storrie and Day will be providing digital solutions such as websites, eCommerce facilities, email marketing and social media services."

"I have a circle of skilled associates

in London and Shropshire who I will be working in partnership with."

"My company name is a combination of family names and its strapline is 'Creating stories in the enigmatic digital day' and this is what I aim to provide for my clients. It is very exciting to be launching my own agency and I am really looking forward to helping other brands evolve in the exciting digital marketplace."

Demi added: "I have even taken on my first employee, Aida the office dog, who will be keeping me company as I develop my business!"

Demi can be contacted at hello@storrieandday.com

Future looks bright after award success

BUSINESS LATEST

Report by James Pugh

CASTINGS manufacturer Grainger & Worrall said its future looks bright after it scooped top prize at this year's Shropshire Chamber Business Awards.

The Bridgnorth-based firm, which employs more than 600 people, picked up the Company of the Year award at the recent awards ceremony.

It overcame strong competition from Shrewsbury-based car dealership Furrows Ltd, building contractor Pave Aways, which is based near Oswestry, and Shrewsbury telcoms specialist Pure Telecom.

The event, attended by about 700 people, saw more than a dozen awards handed out at the ceremony at Telford International Centre.

Grainger & Worrall produces castings for engines, working with high-end car makers including F1 teams. It also played a pivotal role in launching the £4 million Marches Centre of Manufacturing and Technology (MCMT), the industry-led training centre for young engineers in Bridgnorth.

Speaking directly after being announced winner of the award, the firm said: "It is such an amazing sense of achievement. This award is for everybody who works from our base in Bridgnorth. We couldn't have done it without our staff."

"We have put a lot into our workforce and in the last three to four years have increased sales and helped create a manufacturing training centre."

"These are really exciting times and we have a great future. We don't worry about Brexit. The UK is a great place to live and work."

Grainger & Worrall was awarded Shropshire Company of the Year in 2015 - and said significant developments in the last three years have moved the firm on to a



Celebrations as Grainger & Worrall picks up the award for Company of the Year at the Shropshire Chamber Business Awards

new phase. In the last three years it has increased its sales by 50 per cent to over £60 million, and in the last 10 years it has quadrupled in sales from £15 million in 2008/9.

In 2017 it opened the state-of-the-art £5 million machine shop in Bridgnorth to support JLR with a "make like production and measure like production" facility supporting its i54 engine plant.

To provide sustainable skills, it has invested in a consortium to open the Marches Centre of Manufacturing and Technology. The firm has worked hard to diversify

its market and customer base, with over 50 per cent of its sales to export, and no one customer being greater than 11 per cent of its turnover. It has invested £2.5 million in staff training and development. It has supported 75 adult apprenticeships, and runs apprentice, intern and graduate schemes.

The team at David Dexters based in Stanley Lane won the Outstanding Customer Service accolade at the awards, while Bridgnorth Aluminium won the Business in the Community award.

And David Dexters also narrowly missed

out on the Best Small Business category, having been shortlisted for two gongs.

The team wowed the category judges with their commitment to going the extra mile, including placing wine or flowers into cars when their new owners come to pick them up and getting the newspaper for a regular customer when his vehicle is being serviced.

Managing director Richard Whitney said: "We were thrilled to be shortlisted for not one but two awards, so to walk away as winners of the Outstanding Customer Service category is incredible."

County firms could benefit from new Heathrow runway



Bigger capacity at Heathrow could benefit Shropshire firms

BUSINESSES in Shropshire have everything to gain from the expansion of Heathrow Airport, it has been claimed.

Richard Sheehan, chief executive of the Shropshire Chamber of Commerce, believes it could improve connectivity with the rest of the world, supporting exports, trade and job opportunities.

It comes after ministers described their backing for a new runway at the airport as a "historic moment" for the UK.

The cabinet signed off the plans after they were approved by the Gov-

ernment's economic sub-committee, which is chaired by Prime Minister Theresa May.

Mr Sheehan said: "I think in principle it is a very good thing and really important for the infrastructure in the UK."

"It will enable the country to reach out around the world. Especially with Brexit coming up, it makes reaching out to countries outside of Europe really critical."

"Businesses are exploring ways of how they can do business beyond Europe with new customers and opportunities."

"The expansion of the country's premier airport will be vital for the

connectivity of goods and people."

"It is important that other airports such as Birmingham and Manchester feed into the hub. The connectivity between them needs to be as good as possible to simplify the process of people and goods moving around."

"Exporting is a big business and it is going to get bigger."

"My only real concern with the expansion is the length of time it takes for these things to actually happen."

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling announced £2.6 billion in compensation for residents and noise abatement measures.

Environmental groups are opposed to the plan.



We have become over-dependent on single use plastics



Consider getting involved with any beach clean-up activities that are organised on holiday

Cutting down on your plastic use on holiday

By Catherine Mack

THERE was a time when the question, 'Do you take plastic?' had a very different meaning on holiday – when holiday laissez-faire lured us into endless treat fests.

That same holiday laissez-faire has now maxed out the plastic issue in other ways – our over-dependence on single-use plastics when we take a break.

A worrying amount of single-use plastic gets used on holidays.

So here are our 10 top tips on how to ditch the plastic when you travel on holiday.

1. Bottled water is one of the biggest single-use plastic criminals, so treat yourself to a quality reusable bottle before you travel, and buy one large plastic bottle to refill from. Don't assume you can't drink the tap water when you get to your destination, either. You'll be amazed how many countries do actually have safe drinking water.

And if you can't drink from the tap, consider buying a filtering or purifying water bottle, or a UV water purifying pen. All genius devices.

2. It is very annoying having to buy bottled water after airport security. This handy website wateratairports.com tells you where you can find fountains 'on the other side'. Airlines are not legally obliged to give you water, sadly, but many of them are working towards plastic-free policies.

Look out for the Zero Cabin Waste campaign (cabinwaste.eu); it is in its early days, but it's a start.

3. Ditch single-use plastic cosmetic bottles if possible. Seek out solid shampoo bars, sun creams that come in cool metal tins or coconut oil as moisturiser. And soap. Remember soap?

And rather than buying 100ml tubes of everything, just top up your reusable bottles at home. As for hotel toiletries, tell the hotel you just don't want them anymore. Unless you make this clear, they will keep giving it.

4. Many parents are becoming plastic savvy, bringing cool bento boxes instead of plastic sandwich bags to the beach, for example. However, baby wipes are pure plastic poison and nappies are the worst, often made with 50 per cent plastic. It really is time to think about washable nappies and using good old fashioned cloths instead of wipes. Bamboo washable wipes are beautiful things.

5. Microbeads, those little plastic balls found in beauty and cleaning products, may have been banned in the UK and elsewhere, but they still exist in many countries. They have been banned for a reason, so don't give in and buy them on holiday.

6. Bring your own camping cutlery set with you for picnic lunches and so on. That



Always remove plastic litter when you see it on a beach



Treat yourself to a quality reusable bottle before you travel

way you don't have to accept plastic cutlery when you are getting food to go.

7. If you are using a tour operator on holiday, try and use a company with an anti-plastics policy. Responsible Travel has done some of the work for you with its 'no single use plastic' holidays.

8. Few people want to have the tampon conversation, but their plastic wrappings and applicators are really not good news.

Even cardboard applicators often have a plastic lining. Some women are changing to silicone menstrual cups, but if you aren't ready for that step, seek out applicator-free tampons with a lot less packaging.

9. Dental hygienists rarely discuss the cleanliness of our oceans. But if you like to buy a new toothbrush for holiday, look for bamboo ones. Biodegradable floss is also available. We all like to use drinking

straws too, but they are top of the single use scandals. Treat yourself to a stainless steel straw to bring on holiday; your drinks taste cooler and look cooler.

10. Ask your tour operator or hotel if there are any beach clean-up activities you can become involved with. Local communities often arrange events, especially in peak season. And always remove plastic litter when you see it.



Nappies can contain up to 50 per cent plastic

Gut guru shares her rules for good health

OVER the past few years, gut health has become a hot topic in scientific research, and studies have shown just how important maintaining a healthy digestive system can be – not just for physical health, but for our mental wellbeing too, writes Liz Connor.

Poor gut health has been linked to a number of issues ranging from obesity and diabetes to rheumatoid arthritis, irritable bowel syndrome and depression.

Experts are dubbing the area the body's 'second brain', believing microbes and nerves in your digestive tract can effectively alter everything from hunger pangs to your mood.

If you've been feeling 'off' recently, your inharmonious gut flora could be to blame, but with 100 trillion bacteria living in your gut – both beneficial and pathogenic – maintaining the ideal balance can be tricky.

We asked wellbeing guru and best-selling author Liz Earle, author of *The Good Gut Guide* (£25, Orion Spring), to share her top tips for keeping your digestive system in good shape.



1. Take a daily probiotic

"Although it won't undo an unhealthy diet, taking a multi-strain probiotic each day (ideally one that includes at least eight different strains) is a useful insurance policy, alongside a diet filled with fresh and fermented foods. It can also help speed up the transit time of food and waste matter passing through your body, easing and regulating bowel movements."

2. Drink fermented beverages

"Why not wash down your probiotics with a zingy kombucha shot or a glass of milk kefir? I start my day with a glass of kefir – a live yoghurt drink packed with powerfully beneficial probiotics, and I find this gives me a real boost in the morning and has made a huge difference to my overall health and wellbeing."

"I make my own kefir at home using kefir grains and cow's milk, although you can use coconut milk, coconut water or any other nut 'milks'."



3. Go organic

"Buy fresh produce from farmers' markets or look in supermarkets for loose organic fruit and veg that have yet to be scrubbed clean."

This is such an easy way to take on board the healthy soil-based bacteria that help improve digestive and immune functions."

4. Exercise

"Daily exercise keeps your gut moving – even just a short daily walk in the fresh air can make all the difference to keeping your gut healthy."

"Five to 10 minutes of meditation at the beginning or end of the day can also help relax both brain and gut, which will boost your overall wellbeing."

"I'm a recent convert to running and enjoy early-morning runs around my West Country farm, or a park if I'm in London."

5. Give your gut time to rest

"It's really important to allow our body, and therefore our gut, to rest from time to time. Whenever possible therefore, try to rest your gut overnight, allowing a clear 12-hour window when nothing is eaten."

"It's also worth considering juice-only days to fully rest your digestive system – I try to have a juice cleanse at least twice a year."

"Juices are natural cleansers and a quick and easy weekend reboot can make a real difference to how we look and feel."

Sorry Marks, your styles are just pants



Great for cardigans and knickers, but former Vogue editor Alexandra Shulman damns M&S for offering “boring clothes in a sea of dullness”

If you want a good quality, comfy cardigan you can't go wrong with Marks & Spencer, writes Diane Davies.

Similarly, some nice big knickers and sturdy lingerie then M&S is the place to go.

Quality and comfort pretty much guaranteed – in their clothing and customer service.

But if I want to dress to impress this is one of the last shops on the high street I would go. And with sales continuing to dwindle for the clothing retailer it seems many shoppers would agree.

So when former British Vogue editor Alexandra Shulman recently described M&S as offering “boring” clothes in a “sea of dullness”, I couldn't help but reluctantly agree.

Her damning verdict on the state of M&S arguably reflects the thoughts that the loyal British buying public dare not utter about the nation's much-loved store. But shoppers are talking with their feet – and walking away.

Miss Shulman, who left Vogue last year after 25 years, reflected on the M&S crisis when giving a talk in London.

The chain announced last month that 100 stores will close by 2022 including the flagship store in Walsall putting some 94 jobs at risk. Most branches at risk have yet to be named. It also reported a collapse in full-year profits with a 62.1 per cent fall in pre-tax profit to £66.8 million in the year to March 31. Clothing sales continue to plunge each year.

Miss Shulman said: “I really think Marks & Spencer is having problems because what they are doing is not very interesting. Boring.

“You go into their stores and it's a sea of dullness. And what is unquestionably true now is if you want people to go into your shop, into your bricks and mortar space – and all of these high

street stores are committed to a lot of space – then you have to have a reason why people are going to walk into the shop rather than just looking online.”

For me, the M&S experience when clothing shopping falls into two camps. One side of the store offers the classic, predictable, ranges that are the mainstay of any wardrobe from t-shirts and woollies to tailored office wear and traditional denim.

In the other camp, are the latest lines which are best approached when wearing sunglasses as the bright colours and bold prints blaze like a beacon across the store.

Eye-catching they may be but despite the brash colours the styles tend to be familiar and staid – the sort of outfit a “crazy” aunt might wear.

What self-respecting adult wants to go out looking like a children's TV presenter?

Surely M&S can come up with a happy medium. We need more lines somewhere in the middle, offering perhaps sexy sophistication, subtly sassy or flatteringly

bold but classy.

We girls want to be noticed – nobody was every complimented on their sensible shift dress. But we don't want to look like we just completed a colour run.

There are some successes – a recently unveiled £40 leopard print dress was selling out within hours online – but one or two popular lines won't turn M&S profits around.

On the plus side there seem to be regular sales so you can pick up quality clothes at a good price. Perfect for padding out your work wardrobe – we all need a cardigan.

For a lady of ‘traditional size’, I can be sure that when I pick up clothes from the rail in the size I believe I am (if not the size I would like to be) they will fit. This is not always the case when buying

from the pile-it-high cheaper retailers. There is little more depressing than having to fetch a garment in a larger size as you admit defeat in the fitting rooms after fruitlessly wrestling a zip that really should fasten.

That soul-destroying walk across the shop floor to get the bigger size or asking the inevitably skinny shop girl to do so is unspeakable torture.

Buying online avoids the risk of such embarrassment – but it is nice to pick an outfit and wear it that night. If only M&S were offering the sort of clothes I would wear on a night out.

On another positive note, M&S customer service is renowned and of course their lingerie range is extensive and reliable (I).

But when it comes to buying clothing from M&S for me, it's just pants – and a comfy cardigan.



Former Vogue editor Alexandra Shulman

How healthy are these new extreme diets?



Eating under 500 calories a day for 12 weeks will make you lose weight

FROM Dukan and “teatoxes”, to 5:2 and Keto, keeping up with diet trends can be tricky.

One minute we're being told to nix carbs completely, and the next we're all eating like cavemen (in the case of the Paleo craze). One of the hottest diet trends right now – the Cambridge Diet (or Cambridge Weight Plan) – claims it can help dieters shed weight faster than most other plans, thanks to its extremely low calorie limit.

But is it safe, are there any side-effects, and will the weight stay off long-term?

WHAT IS THE CAMBRIDGE DIET?

Promising fast and effective results, this rapid weight-loss plan advocates regular consumption of meal replacement shakes, soups, porridges and snack bars, designed to fulfil all of your daily nutritional requirements, while cutting out hundreds of calories.



Low calorie tomato soup

The plan actually dates back to the 1960s and was devised by biochemist Dr Alan Howard at Cambridge University (hence the name) and its profile has been rising in recent years – before really gathering steam in late 2017, thanks to social media platforms like Instagram and Pinterest.

By following its strict rules, it claims it can help dieters lose up to a stone a month, without depriving them of important nutrients or protein to keep lean tissue – a factor that's often overlooked in other extreme dieting methods, like juicing and fasting.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

There are a total of six variations of the plan, ranging from 440 to 1,500 calories a day, depending on factors such as your starting weight and weight-loss goals. Step one, or “Sole Source”, is the most austere, asking dieters to cut out all “normal” daily foods and solely eat from Cambridge Weight Plan's own-brand, low-calorie range of products, along with 2.5-litres of water. Later stages – like step six, or “Maintenance” – are more flexible, allowing room

Report by Liz Connor

for some healthy foods/meals, interspersed with a few meal-replacements. So, you start at step one, and then slowly introduce solid foods as you begin to shed weight.

The idea is that you eat so few calories that your body is forced into a state of “ketosis”, where it starts to burn fat stores as a survival method. In this metabolic state, most of the energy supply of the body comes from ketone bodies in the blood, rather than glucose.

Because of this, the weight tends to fall off Cambridge Dieters rapidly – but as it involves eating less than 1,000 calories per day, experts warn that it should not be followed for more than 12 continuous weeks.

As it's extreme, this diet is not to be entered into without supervision, and some steps might even require written consent from your doctor.

You can only get your hands on the products – which typically cost about £2.40 per meal – by meeting with a Cambridge Weight Plan consultant.

WHAT IS A TYPICAL DAY'S FOOD LIKE?

Millennials are apparently flocking to the programme, sharing their Cambridge meals while looking for inspiration on Instagram and Pinterest from others on the same journey. At stage one, a typical day on the diet could include a strawberry shake for breakfast, a banana shake for lunch, and chicken and mushroom flavoured soup for dinner.

As the diet progresses to the later stages, dieters can introduce coffee and tea, and low-calorie meal ideas like Vietnamese prawn curry, roasted ratatouille and cod fillet with poached egg and asparagus.

IS IT SAFE?

Under one-to-one supervision from one of their trained consultants, the Cambridge Diet claims to be safe and healthy to follow, but some experts and nutritionists say they do not recommend diets restricted to under 600 calories per day.

Max Bridger, a personal trainer from LDN Muscle (ldnmuscle.com), says: “It's not something I would recommend. Sure, eating under 500 calories for 12 weeks will make you drop weight fast, but you'll also lose a lot of muscle too – so don't expect an athletic, toned physique at the end.”

“Ketosis is a state not many people will realistically achieve either,” he continues. “As well as being very tough to achieve, ketosis is easy to lose, and comes with side effects like bad breath, digestive discomfort, nausea and even hair thinning.”

The bottom line, Bridger says, is that extreme weight-loss plans are not something people should really utilise, as there is nothing to prevent rebound weight gain.



Portmeirion Botanic Garden tableware in picnic setting



Cocktail jug with stirrer and glassware, The White Company.

Summer dining party finds for pop-up feast

By Sam Wylie-Harris

WE all love the summery feeling of eating and drinking in the open air, especially when blue skies inspire thoughts of long lazy lunches set against lush foliage.

And to give those warm-weather get-togethers an even bigger boost on the feelgood front, make sure you set the scene in style.

Luckily, the shops are packed with colourful summer dining and al-fresco entertaining collections right now: Here are some of our favourite finds to furnish your pop-up feast...

1. Sea Birds Bamboo Salad Bowl with Lid, £18, Salad Servers, £6, and Dip Tray Trio, £14, Cath Kidston stores nationwide

We love Cath Kidston's quirky seaside bird print, which evokes thoughts of childhood summer holidays. Best of all, the salad bowl lid can be used as a chopping board, and to fend off any flying picnic pests.

2. Les Jardin de la Comtesse Exotic Flowers Dinner Plates – Set of 2, £20, Bowls – Set of 2, £14, Joanna Buchanan Shrimp Napkin Ring – Set of 2, £49, Bitossi Bloom Wine Goblet – Pink, £6, LSA Basis Jug, £20, Seletti Industry Garden Chair, currently reduced to £112 from £160, and matching Garden Table – White, currently reduced to £199.50 from £285, Amara

Amara is a one-stop shop for some of the most talented interior designers and their stylish home decos, and this bijoux table and chair teamed with palm print tableware, and little gems such as the bejewelled shrimp napkin rings, bring home entertaining to another level.

3. Portmeirion Botanic Garden Tableware currently from £7.25 each (sale price), 10-inch Dinner Plates, £16.50 each, and other serving pieces from a selection at Portmeirion (picnic hamper, tablecloth and other props, stylist's own)

Portmeirion's classic Botanical Garden print has been in bloom for 40 years, and there's good reason why we still covet these lovely ceramic pieces with their whimsical floral prints.

4. Four Person Fresh Greens Hamper, £59, Marks & Spencer

At one with nature, this pretty hamper has a decorative leaf print design and holds all the necessities for your open-air spread.

5. Wilko BBQ Pizza Oven Grill and Smoker, £140, Wilko

Entertaining the idea of serving a piping hot pizza, as well as kebabs from the grill? This pizza oven, grill and smoker boasts several different functions with the option of a pizza stone, charcoal pan and a smoker with a water pan to slow-cook red meats and get the juices flowing.

It looks smart too, and it is easy to handle.

6. Rattan-style Keter Cool Bar, £43, Morrisons stores nationwide until August



Wilko BBQ pizza oven grill and smoker



Cath Kidston Women's Sea Birds salad bowl, servers and dip tray

What's not to love about this weather-proof party table, which doubles as a posh table and cool box all in one?

The table lid extends over an ice bucket base with double wall insulation, to keep your wine and beer perfectly chilled while you're firing up the barbie.

7. Cocktail Jug with Stirrer, £45, The White Company

With so many long refreshing drinks,

such as a P&T (white port and tonic – also dubbed the new G&T), tickling our taste buds, this cocktail jug is a must for smart summer soirees.

8. Pasha Bowl – Red/Green, £14, Pasha Large Plate – Red/Green, £34, Keramas Acrylic Tumblers – Set of Four, £34, Artichoke & Desert Plant Candle Holders – Set of Three, £96, Karaman Floor Cushion – Multi, £245 each, Oka



Poolside gin glass, tumbler and highball from John Lewis

If you're going to plant yourself outside and host a garden party, you may as well invest in some statement tableware complemented by green thistles, such as these lovely artisan artichoke candle holders, and dinner plates in burnt orange to mirror the setting sun.

9. John Lewis Poolside Gin Glass, Orange, £8, Highball Glass, Turquoise, £6, Fun Watermelon Tumbler, £5, John Lewis

Unexpected benefits of cracking out a cold one

THOMAS Jefferson once said: "Beer, if drunk in moderation, softens the temper, cheers the spirit and promotes health."

Though he may not always be right about the temper – ask the bouncers at any UK nightclub – he may be surprisingly correct about the health claim.

Though a hefty proportion of the nation may find this hard to believe (particularly when staggering from slumber on a Sunday morning with heads like bongo drums) a range of studies have highlighted that beer has benefits for an array of organs and senses.

Before you go charging off on a medically-advised 'mad one', these benefits are limited – NHS guidelines stipulate no more than 14 units of alcohol per week for men and women. Your merciless hangover has in no way been vindicated, and the good doctor is not about to endorse your 10-pint pub-crawl.

But when consumed in moderation, the perks of a pint might even outweigh the pains.

So what are benefits of beer-drinking?

1. It may reduce the risk of heart disease

Perhaps the most proven positive of a well-placed pint: drinking beer is good for your heart. According to a 2012 study published in the European Heart Journal, beverages rich in polyphenols, like beer, have been shown repeatedly to carry substantial cardiovascular benefits, and drinking one half to two pints of beer a day lessens your chance of heart disease by around 25%. So here's your unusual prescription – plenty of exercise, a healthy diet, and a congratulatory post-run pint. Now let's move on, before anyone mentions the liver.

2. It can be good for your long-term memory

With an emphasis on 'long-term'. After a boozy night out, don't expect to know what you did or said after your seventh pint of Stella. However, studies suggest that chemicals found in beer can slow the progress of degenerative cognitive diseases like Alzheimer's. Sipping on your beer of choice won't help you study for your exams, but, decades down the line, it might help you remember which ones you passed.

3. It's apparently good for your bones

We'll admit that, overall, alcohol probably causes more broken bones than it prevents, but given that small amounts of beer actively increase your bone density, you can probably scratch most of these accidents up to user error. According to a 2013 study, beer contains a high proportion of silicon, a key component of

bone construction, in quantities not found in most foods. Products high in hops and barley are particularly effective.

4. It could increase your creativity

OK, so this may be one for your mental rather than physical health – and believe me, it doesn't make your drunk Facebook statuses any less embarrassing – but evidence suggests a light tipple increases creativity and outside-the-box-thinking. A

2017 study published in the journal Consciousness and Cognition, found participants with a small amount of alcohol in their bloodstream outstripped their sober counterparts in cognitive tests. It's as Hemingway (supposedly) said: "Write drunk, edit sober."

5. It may help your sight

This may sound like alcoholic mysticism – or at best a dubious marketing strategy – but there is evidence to suggest that unlatching a lager might be just as good for your eyes as gulping down a carrot smoothie. According to researchers from Canada, one beer a day releases anti-oxidants that help to stop the formation of cataracts. Unsurprisingly, there's a catch: Drinking three or more beers a day reverses this trend, on top of fuzzing your faculties.

6. It could reduce the risk of kidney stones

No one seems entirely sure why beer carries this particular benefit, but a 2013 study suggested that a bottle before bedtime could reduce the risk of kidney stones by 40%, or even more. Some put it down as a component of hops, others to the increased fluid intake, but all agree that periodic beer drinking is doing your kidneys a kindness.

So, to a toast to your health. A beer for memory, a couple for bone structure, a lager for the heart and a bitter for the brain. But not all at once.



A-tishoo of lies



Millions of people spend the summer sneezing due to hay fever

It is the one big downside to summer – hay fever. Millions suffer, but the truth about its causes and treatment can be tricky to pin down.

Can honey cure my hay fever? Is hay fever caused by hay? Pollen expert Dr Jean Emberlin debunks the myths and provides the answers, writes Mark Andrews.

Stuffy nose, watery eyes, itchy throat... when it comes to getting out and enjoying the good weather during the summer months, being one of the unlucky 18 million people in the UK who suffer from hay fever is never fun.

And living in a rural county like Shropshire can add to the problem. Known for its everlasting rolling fields, our region is idyllic – but that beauty can come at a cost.

Allergies can seemingly appear overnight, and because allergy to pollen can be cyclical, it could suddenly hit you as an adult, even if you never suffered as a child. The irritating symptoms, which are often confused with those of the common cold, occur when the body comes into contact with an allergen and the immune system is kicked into overdrive.

Although it is easily remedied with the right antihistamines, if you're a first-time sufferer, it doesn't help that there's a lot of misinformation

out there about how you should treat, or prevent, an allergy attack.

Dr Jean Emberlin has helped debunk five of the most common misconceptions about the condition that, for many, can ruin the summer months.

1. Flowers cause allergies

Lots of people wrongly associate hay fever with colourful blooms, but as Dr Emberlin says: "Showy flowers usually have insect dispersed pollen, which is sticky and heavy and is carried between the flowers by insects, so it does not get carried in the air."

The pollen most likely to cause an allergy is actually the airborne type, from grass, weeds and trees, such as birch and oak. These types of pollen are small and light and are produced in vast numbers," notes Dr Emberlin. "They can either be breathed in or enter through the eyes, triggering the allergic reactions of hay fever."

"The pollen from flowers is not usually a major trigger for hay fever, unless a person is exposed to flowers a lot, such as working in a florist shop."

2. Hay fever is caused by hay

"Hay is cut dried grass," says Dr Emberlin, "and while it may contain grass pollen grains and can trigger hay fever, it is certainly not the main cause. The name 'hay fever' may have come about because the allergy peaks in the summer months when grasses flower and hay is made."

3. Rain can clear pollen

There is some truth to this claim, because rain will temporarily clear pollen from the air, but often before a downpour there is an increase in wind gusts and downdraughts of air.

"The gusts can lift deposited pollen from surfaces and the downdraughts can bring pollen down from higher levels in the air where it has been lifted by convection currents," says Dr Emberlin. "Both of these factors can increase the pollen count, leading to symptoms

just before or as the rain starts." Stormy weather can also make the particles easier to inhale.

"During the rainfall, grass pollen grains can burst under osmotic pressure, releasing minute starch particles held within them that contain allergen," says Dr Emberlin.

"This can lead to breathing problems in asthma sufferers who are allergic to grass allergens."

4. Rubbing Vaseline around my nose will cure my hay fever

"Think of your nose like a chimney with smoke going up it," says Dr Emberlin. "Some of the smoke might cling to the outside of the chimney like soot, but most of the smoke will still make its way upwards."

She explains that the same is true with your nose: "You put a bit of Vaseline around the outside and it might catch a few grains, but most of the pollen is still going to go up your nose."

"I don't think lubricating the nostril helps at all – other than easing some of the soreness."

5. Honey can cure my hay fever

Many people swear that spooning a teaspoon of local honey on your porridge each day, immunises you against pollen and helps alleviate hay fever symptoms. So is it true?

"I'm not saying that it doesn't work," says Dr Emberlin, "but the problem is that bees visit plants which have big, colourful flowers to collect pollen – rather than the type of plants that cause hay fever, like grasses and trees. It's very difficult to see how the honey can work."

"People might say flowers get covered in grass pollen, from a honey marketing point of view, but I've never seen a single grass pollen grain in honey. Even if there were a few, the amount would be so microscopically tiny, it wouldn't have any effect."

"The nutrients in honey might help the immune system, and it certainly wouldn't do harm to eat honey from the local area, but I'm afraid it's not going to cure your hay fever."

Poet turned his back on life of crime



When he returns to the West Midlands, Benjamin Zephaniah feels as if he's never been away

PEOPLE'S poet Professor Benjamin Zephaniah remembers a visit to Shropshire as though it were yesterday.

He performed at the town's Theatre Severn and met a writer who suggested he start writing his autobiography. It was eight years ago.

"My agent had always told me I had to write an autobiography," he remembers. "But I was never really sure. I didn't want to have a deadline or a deal in place. I just wanted to write without any pressure. Then at Shrewsbury, I met someone who said it was time I got started."

So he did. And in between then and now, he became one of the few Brits to visit North Korea, he became a Professor at the University of Brunel, became one of the leading stars in the BAFTA-winning Peaky



Benjamin Zephaniah in Peaky Blinders

Blinders and released a new album. He laughs. "I got busy doing other things."

"But that was always the point of doing an autobiography. I wanted to do it well, rather than do it quick."

"And I didn't just want it to be about my story. I wanted it to be a social history, I wanted it to look back at the fight against racism, the miners' strike and about the other things that people had to fight for."

Zephaniah's autobiography, *The Life And Rhymes*, was released in May and went straight into the UK Best Seller List. He's been on the road to talk about some of the stories from his book. He played Shrewsbury's Theatre Severn and Birmingham Town Hall recently.

"It was great to be back in Shrewsbury," he says. "I've visited a few times. And Birmingham is always special because that was my home for so many years."

Zephaniah now lives in Lincolnshire, in a small, quiet village, but he is a regular visitor to Birmingham. He visited the city frequently when writing his book.

By Andrew Morris

"It was the strangest thing," he says. "I had to interview my own mother because I wanted her story. She was part of the Windrush generation and I wanted to know more about her experiences. It's a social history as well as a life story, so I came to the city to find out what really happened."

Windrush has, of course, dominated the news in recent months and Zephaniah has been aghast that so many people who were offered British citizenship were caught up in the Home Office's so-called Hostile Environment.

"Lives have been shattered because of it. Lives have literally been ruined. There was one man who died of a broken heart, he just gave up because he lost his job, his home and everything he'd worked so hard for. It's been devastating. And I've looked at what's been happening and thought: 'it could have been me'."

"My parents came from the Caribbean. In my mother's case, she saw a poster asking people from Jamaica to come over. She moved to Sheffield then settled in Birmingham where she became a nurse."

In his book, Zephaniah chronicles the race riots of Handsworth in his autobiography as well as his time in gangs. He also reflects on the openly racist attitudes of police and the death of his cousin, Michael Powell, who died in police custody.

Zephaniah says: "Things have changed. Things are not as bad as they were in the 1970s. I remember my first experience. I was eight and a boy cycled past me and hit me on the head with a brick. He told me: 'Go home, you black b'."

"And I remember thinking that I was on my way home. When I got back, I told my mother. She explained that some people didn't like me because of the colour of my skin."

Zephaniah became involved in petty crime and slept with a gun under his pillow. Then, one day, he had enough. He'd always been a fan of poetry, after his mother made up impromptu verses at home. And he'd always harboured dreams of becoming a poet. He knew that if he stayed in Birmingham, he'd probably end up in prison or dead – so he fled to London to start afresh.

Gradually, he found himself mixing with other poets and entertainers and somehow he managed to get his life back on track. His book describes his remarkable story, in which he left the sound systems of Birmingham and made it to the world stage.

He became friends with Nelson Mandela and also became the first person to perform with reggae giants The Wailers, following the death of lead singer Bob Marley.



Bright flowers are not to blame for hay fever



Let's learn to love our garden invaders

Many of us feel squeamish about insects. But, argues Shrewsbury-based ecologist Tris Pearce, we must learn to love them for the good of our planet

Insects, of which there are over a staggering five million species estimated worldwide, represent approximately two-thirds of the fauna on the planet.

Now summer is here, insects are becoming more noticeable again in our daily life. Insects are so important for the food chain and human survival.

Most insects are actually favourable to humankind and our surroundings, not harmful. It is clear that with no insects, the environment simply would not function as it does, yet few of us have considered how these abundant and diverse organisms actually affect our everyday lives.

Let's look at pollinators, some plant species are self-pollinators, however most plant species rely on insects to distribute pollen to other flowers. Some plants including orchids have co-evolved to be pollinated by specific insects, as

our very own Charles Darwin discovered whilst in Madagascar. Where would we be without the bee? Well as humans, we rely so much on certain plant species and owe so much to the bees. Bees use clever 'baskets' of stiff hairs on the legs and abdomen to collect pollen. Without bees pollinating the plants we rely on so much, it would be a different world – just look at your dinner plate and thank the bees.

Pesticide use is causing even more damage to honey bee populations than previously thought, so how can we do more for bees and other insects? One way is to use less insecticides, particularly harmful 'neonicotinoids', and our Government is supporting the ban, which it says it will maintain after Brexit. Let's put away the pesticides and let nature back in to do its job.

Another factor is intensive agriculture known to damage bee numbers is the decrease in quality of nutrients, especially sugars, available in the nectar and pollen that bees eat.

This could be opposed by setting some insect rich land aside, such as allowing nectar rich field margins, by converting five to eight per cent of arable land to pollinator habitats these 'strips of land' can support greater or equivalent crop yields even after accounting for loss of field area.

We don't all have arable land available to do this so some people are mowing the garden lawn less frequently as they realise the biodiversity gain, also the cost and 'bad back' saving it creates.

The richer grasslands then provide insect preferable habitats or 'bee lawns'. Did you know the dandelion is one of our bees first sources of food early in the spring time and are vital, so don't be in a rush to mow them down.

Some species such as the iconic stag beetle has seen massive decline in numbers. The

stag beetle is now a 'protected species', listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and presumed absent from Shropshire.

Beetles and their larva carry out another important role in biodiversity, waste disposal or rather the decomposition of organic matter and aeration of the soil.

Slug problems can be catered for by having dead wood piles available for slug predators like ground beetles, devil's coach-horse beetle and centipedes.

Having a wildflower patch with 'pollinator friendly plants' in the garden and a pond can also provide perfect insect rich areas.

There are around two million acres designated as garden in Britain so imagine what we could achieve for insects, if we all provided a bit of space for invertebrates.

Insects provide the role of biological control, some pest predators such as ladybirds and lacewings, who will munch away on your pesky aphids, love wild areas and flowering shrubs and will also hibernate in habitat piles.

Many think of insects as little more than crop-eating, disease-carrying micro biters. But in reality insects are vital in any ecosystem and are the basis of the whole food chain. The removal of insects from an area or habitat can lead to much broader impacts as insects provide food for amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals and us humans.

We all learn at a young age the importance of insects and I remember collecting caterpillars from leaves on the hedge. So perhaps future generations will see the vital role insects play in our lives. The world would be a better place for all of us, if we stopped asking "what do they do for me?" and start asking "what can I do for them?"

Follow me on twitter @tpearcewildlife

'Let's put away the pesticides and let nature back in to do its job'

Survey shines spotlight on mental health



One in eight people in Shropshire and one in seven in Telford and Wrekin are living with depression or anxiety – and there are links between deprivation and mental well-being

ONE in eight people in Shropshire and one in seven in Telford and Wrekin are living with depression or anxiety, according to a survey of patients registered with GPs.

Figures from Public Health England show that 12.5 per cent of registered patients in Shropshire were suffering with at least one of the mental health conditions at the start of last year.

For Telford and Wrekin the figure was 14 per cent.

The most recent survey showed that the rate in Shropshire has increased by 16.9 per cent since 2015.

But there was a five per cent drop in Telford and Wrekin over the same period.

The Holistic Clinic in Ludlow offers help to patients with depression and anxiety, offering a wide range of palliative and remedial healthcare.



Symptoms vary from person to person

Emma Kenchington, an acupuncturist and musculoskeletal practitioner, says the clinic sees 30 to 40 people a week and there has been a rise in people accessing its services.

She said: "I would say there has been a rise, especially people who are self-employed and feel the pressure a lot more."

"We have people come for all sorts of reasons. Anxiety is probably the main thing and long term anxiety will probably lead to depression."

She said services that help people with their mental health are "absolutely imperative", adding: "People should always have a choice when it comes to their health."

The West Midlands as a whole had a higher than average percentage of patients

By Lisa O'Brien

with anxiety or depression.

Across the region, 14.1 per cent of respondents in the survey reported one or both of the conditions, an increase of 9.6 per cent on 2015.

Stephen Buckley, from mental health charity Mind, said: "As attitudes towards mental health improve and with it the understanding that help is available, we're going to see more and more people seek support."

"No matter where you live, it is important that everyone has access to quality mental health services, when they need them."

Across England, 13.7 per cent of GPs' patients reported living with depression or anxiety at the start of 2017.

They were more common among women, with 14.7 per cent saying they had at least one of the two conditions. For men, the rate was 12.7 per cent.

Nationally, figures varied significantly between areas. The highest rates of depression and anxiety were in Liverpool, where nearly one in five respondents noted the conditions – more than double the rate in West Berkshire.

Deprived

The results of the survey, conducted between January and March last year, also showed significant differences according to the background of the respondent, with those from more deprived areas more likely to report anxiety or depression.

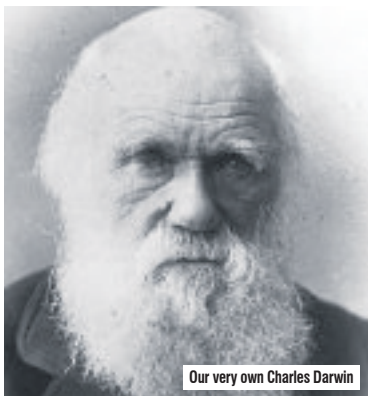
Mr Buckley said that the reasons for regional variations were unclear.

He added: "We do know that there are links between, for example, deprivation and mental wellbeing, so it may be that prevalence is genuinely higher in certain areas."

"On the other hand, more positively, it may be that in some places there is greater awareness that you can get some support from your GP for your mental health."

"Symptoms of mental health problems vary from person to person, but if you're experiencing depression you might feel low, numb, worthless or without hope."

"Everyone experiences good days and bad days but if the feelings don't go away after a couple of weeks or keep returning, it could be a sign that you're experiencing a common mental health problem like depression or an anxiety disorder."



Our very own Charles Darwin



Who Dares Wins
8pm
Nick Knowles presents the game show in which two pairs of complete strangers team up, each battling to outdo the other by listing as much as they know about a given subject.

BBC1

6.00

Breakfast.

10.00

Saturday Kitchen Live. Andi Oliver is joined by chefs Will Holland and Neil Rankin, plus special guest Kimberley Walsh, and drinks expert Olly Smith picks a selection to go with the studio dishes.

11.30

Simply Nigella. Recipes include a salmon, avocado, watercress and pumpkin seed salad, a chicken shawarma, and chocolate chip cookie dough pots served with ice-cream or creme fraiche. (R)

12.00

Bargain Hunt. Catherine Southon and Thomas Plant lend their expertise to two teams of reds and two teams of blues at a fair in Swinderby, Lincolnshire. (R)

1.00

BBC News; Weather.

1.15

Wimbledon 2018. Sue Barker presents live coverage of the women's singles final on the 12th and penultimate day of competition at SW19. This time last year at the All England Club, the women's final pitted US veteran and five-time former champion Venus Williams against Spain's Garbine Muguruza. Williams had seen off Britain's Johanna Konta in the semi-final and, at the age of 37, would have become the oldest woman to win a Grand Slam singles title in the Open era. However, it was Muguruza who took a second Grand Slam crown – and a maiden victory at Wimbledon – with a straight-sets victory.

6.50

BBC News.

7.00

Midlands Today; Weather.

7.10

Pointless Celebrities. TV experts Kieran Long, Piers Taylor, Martin Roberts, Amanda Lamb, Vicki Butler-Henderson, Tiff Needell, John Hammond and Laura Tobin compete in the unorthodox quiz show. (R)

8.00

Who Dares Wins. Nick Knowles presents the game show in which two pairs of complete strangers team up, each battling to outdo the other by listing as much as they know about a given subject.

8.40

Casualty. New paramedic Ruby (former EastEnders star Maddy Hill) is pushed to her limits on her first day with Iain and Sam. Alicia struggles to work with Eddie and her outbursts increase.

9.30

Mrs Brown's Boys. Agnes and the Brown family await the fruits of their fraud after faking Grandad's death to get a payout, but the insurance company starts to grow suspicious. (R)

10.00

BBC News; Weather; National Lottery Update.

10.20

MOTD: FIFA World Cup 2018 Highlights. Jason Mohammad introduces action from the third place play-off, which took place at Saint Petersburg Stadium, as the semi-final losers did battle for the bronze medal.

10.50

Today at Wimbledon. Clare Balding presents highlights of the penultimate day's play, where the ladies' singles final was the main attraction on Centre Court.

11.50

MOTD: FIFA World Cup 2018 Replay. Another chance to see the third place play-off, which took place at Saint Petersburg Stadium, as the semi-final losers did battle for the bronze medal.

1.35

Weather for the Week Ahead.

1.40

BBC News.



H Is for Hawk: A New Chapter – Natural World
5.50pm
Helen Macdonald, the author of 2014 memoir H Is for Hawk, returns to the world of the goshawk, training a new bird and following a wild goshawk.

BBC2

6.35

Marrying Mum and Dad. A wedding with a cinematic theme.

7.00

Officially Amazing Goes Bunkers. The motoring marvels the Moffatt Brothers return.

7.30

The Engineers. Mark Wright and Lauren Layfield look back at some of the series' best dens. (R)

8.00

Naomi's Nightmares of Nature. Exploring Mexico's Yucatan peninsula. (R)

8.30

Deadly Dinosaurs with Steve Backshall. Steve is on a mission to find the weirdest dinosaur ever. (R)

9.00

Super Cute Animals. Gordon Buchanan travels the world to work out why people find certain animals so endearing, from cuddly pandas and waddling penguins to a laughing chimpanzee and a squeaking frog. (R)

10.00

Athletics: Diamond League Highlights. The Meeting International Mohammed VI.

11.00

Wimbledon 2018. Live coverage of the ladies' wheelchair singles final on day 12. This time last year, Diede de Groot of the Netherlands beat Sabine Ellerbrock to take the spoils at SW19.

12.30

The Best Dishes Ever. A selection of classic recipes that have something of a kick to them. (R)

1.00

Kew on a Plate. Raymond Blanc and Kate Humble try to re-establish the kitchen gardens at Kew. (R)

2.00

Garden Rescue. Advice for a garden owner who loves rocks, but hates decking. (R)

2.45

FILM: An Ideal Husband (1999). A politician tries to save his marriage and career when he is blackmailed into assisting a dubious scheme. Oscar Wilde comedy drama, starring Cate Blanchett and Jeremy Northam.

4.15

Wanted Down Under. The Guest family have a trial week living in Australia.

5.00

Flog It! From Rhosylgiwen Mansion near Cardigan. (R)

5.50

H Is for Hawk: A New Chapter – Natural World. Author and falconer Helen Macdonald trains a new goshawk. (R)

6.50

Wimbledon 2018. Sue Barker presents further live coverage on day 12 at the All England Club, featuring action from the men's and ladies' doubles finals on Centre Court at SW19.

9.00

Reginald D Hunter's Songs of the Border. Against the backdrop of President Trump's planned construction of a wall between the two countries, the comedian takes a 2,000-mile musical road trip along the US-Mexico border.

10.15

FILM: Mississippi Grind (2015). Premiere. Two gamblers go on a road trip alongside the Mississippi river to compete in a high-stakes poker game in New Orleans. Drama, starring Ben Mendelsohn and Ryan Reynolds.

11.55

Golf: Scottish Open. Eilidh Barbour presents highlights of the third round of the European Tour event at Gullane Golf Club in East Lothian, where Rafa Cabrera Bello entered as the defending champion.

12.55

Picnic at Hanging Rock. A reimagining of Joan Lindsay's 1967 mystery novel about three adolescent girls and a teacher from a school in Australia who mysteriously vanish in 1900. (R)

1.50

This Is BBC2. Preview of upcoming programmes from BBC2.



Celebrity Catchphrase
7pm
Stephen Mulhern hosts a star-studded version of the game show, asking Jennie McAlpine, Jason Watkins and Ore Oduba to 'say what they see' as they try to guess familiar phrases.

ITV

6.00

CITV: Sooty 6.10 Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids **6.20** Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids **6.35** Dino Dana **6.50** Mission Employable **6.55** The Oddbods Show **7.05** NinjaGo: Tournament of Elements **7.30** The Haunted Hathaways **7.55** Drop Dead Weird

8.25

ITV News.

8.30

Zoe Ball on Saturday. With Danny Jones, Danny Wallace, Jayde Adams and Stephen Bailey.

9.25

James Martin's American Adventure. The chef begins the Texan leg of his journey in San Antonio.

9.55

Best Walks with a View with Julia Bradbury. The presenter ventures towards Cumbria's High Cup Nick. (R)

10.20

The Best of the Voice Worldwide. Worldwide editions of the singing competition. Last in the series.

11.20

The Best of the Voice Worldwide. Worldwide editions of the singing competition. Last in the series.

12.20

ITV News and Weather; Weather.

12.30

ITV Racing: Live from Newmarket. Coverage from Newmarket, York and Ascot.

2.30

FIFA World Cup 2018. France or Belgium v Croatia or England (Kick-off 3.00pm). Coverage of the third place play-off at Saint Petersburg Stadium, as the semi-final losers do battle for the bronze medal.

5.15

Catchphrase. Guessing game, hosted by Stephen Mulhern. (R)

6.00

ITV News and Weather.

6.15

ITV News Central; Weather.

6.30

Japandemonium. New series. A review of the best Japanese TV, showcasing some of the maddest and funniest moments ever broadcast. Narrated by Melvin Odoom.

7.00

Celebrity Catchphrase. Stephen Mulhern hosts a star-studded version of the game show, as Jennie McAlpine, Jason Watkins and Ore Oduba try to "say what they see" in an effort to win £50,000 for charity.

8.00

The Voice Kids. New series. Emma Willis returns with the junior version of the talent contest, as Will.i.am, Danny Jones and Pixie Lott give youngsters aged from seven to 14 a chance at stardom.

9.35

ITV News and Weather; Weather.

9.55

FILM: The Bourne Supremacy (2004). The amnesiac assassin is framed for a botched CIA operation and faces a fight for survival as he tries to uncover his past. Action thriller sequel, with Matt Damon and Brian Cox.

11.55

Stuck on You: The Football Sticker Story. How four Italian brothers took a childhood obsession and turned it into a worldwide industry – and the British upstarts who took on the mighty Panini to beat them at their own game. (R)

12.55

Jackpot247. Viewers get the chance to participate in live interactive gaming from the comfort of their sofas, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team.

3.00

Mr Selfridge. Nancy has difficulty keeping her engagement to Harry a secret from Gus, and a meddling Princess Marie makes things even trickier. Miss Mardie and Mr Grove come to blows again. (R)

3.50

ITV Nightscreen. Text-based information service.



Great Canal Journeys: India
7pm
The first of two programmes in which Timothy West and Prunella Scales explore India by canal boat. The trip begins in Kerala, a region of palm-fringed lakes, rivers and canals.

Channel 4

6.05

Marathon: Transylvania Ultra. Action from the 74km endurance event.

6.30

Mobil 1: The Grid. Bentley attack America's most famous hill climb at Pikes Peak in Colorado.

7.00

The King of Queens. Arthur has a fall. (R)

7.25

The King of Queens. Carrie thinks back to her wedding day. (R)

7.55

Everybody Loves Raymond. Debra realises Ray is planning something for her birthday. (R)

8.25

Everybody Loves Raymond. An injured bird upsets the Thanksgiving celebrations. (R)

8.55

Frasier. Part two of three. Niles awaits his operation. (R)

9.25

Frasier. Niles and Frasier are invited to join a prestigious club. (R)

9.55

The Big Bang Theory. Amy and Sheldon start a gossip experiment. (R)

10.25

The Big Bang Theory. Priya finds a loophole in the room-mate agreement. (R)

10.55

The Simpsons. The townsfolk hold a film festival. (R)

11.25

The Simpsons. Lisa has her fortune told. (R)

11.55

Come Dine with Me. Four contestants host dinner parties in Leeds. (R)

12.55

Four in a Bed. The competition begins at Peninnick House in St Austell, Cornwall. (R)

1.25

Four in a Bed. The second visit is to Barton Gate Farm in Holsworthy on Devon/Cornwall border. (R)

2.00

Four in a Bed. The third visit of the week is to Hawthorn House in Witney. (R)

2.30

Four in a Bed. The contestants stay at the White Hart Hotel in Wells. (R)

3.00

Four in a Bed. The B&B owners meet for the last time to settle some scores. (R)

3.30

A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. Scarlett Douglas helps a couple find a holiday home in Lanzarote. (R)

4.30

Kirstie and Phil's Love It or List It. Kirstie Allsopp and Phil Spencer meet a couple in Preston, Lancashire. (R)

5.35

Escape to the Chateau: DIY. Jonny and Ashley continue the search for their dream chateau. (R)

6.30

Channel 4 News.

7.00

Great Canal Journeys: India. The first of two programmes in which Timothy West and Prunella Scales explore India, starting in the palm-fringed lakes and rivers of Kerala, where Pru learns a traditional dance. (R)

8.00

FILM: Star Trek: Into Darkness (2013). Premiere. The crew of the starship Enterprise is sent to hunt down a rogue starfleet agent behind a terrorist attack. Sci-fi adventure sequel, with Chris Pine and Zachary Quinto.

10.35

FILM: Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials (2015). Premiere. A group of children who escaped from a mysterious labyrinth journey through a dangerous wasteland. Sci-fi adventure sequel, starring Dylan O'Brien and Kaya Scodelario.

1.00

Ransay's Hotel Hell. (R)

1.50

The Big Narstie Show. (R)

2.45

Hollyoaks. Omnibus. Marrie asks Yasmine for her help with Alfie. (R)

4.50

My Kitchen Rules. (R)

5.45

Star Boot Sale. (R)]



Cricket on 5
7pm
England v India. Mark Nicholas presents action from the second game in the three-match one-day series, which took place at Lord's. With commentary by Michael Vaughan.

Channel 5

6.00

Milkshake!: Little Princess 6.10 Wissper **6.20** Poppy Cat **6.30** Milkshake! Monkey **6.35** The Secret Life of Puppies **6.40** Seaside Antics **6.45** Olly the Little White Van **6.50** Simon **6.55** Peppa Pig **7.10** Paw Patrol **7.15** Thomas & Friends **7.25** Fireman Sam **7.40** Rusty Rivets **7.55** Paw Patrol **8.15** Pirata & Capitano **8.30** Noddy: Toyland Detective **8.45** Floogals **8.55** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom **9.10** Shimmer and Shine **9.30** Digby Dragon **9.45** Peppa Pig **9.50** Peppa Pig

9.55

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. The Turtles enlist the help of the Mighty Mutanimals.

10.30

Access. Showbiz news and gossip.

10.35

Pets Make You Laugh Out Loud. Clips of foul-mouthed parrots and a water-skiing squirrel. (R)

11.00

Police Interceptors. Dog handler Darren tries to end a rooftop stand-off. (R)

11.55

Nightmare Tenants, Slum Landlords: Revisited. Alarming tales from all corners of the buy-to-let system. (R)

12.55

Bad Tenants, Rogue Landlords. A family forced to sleep in one room due to leaks coming from the roof. (R)

2.00

Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. Rain threatens to spoil the opening night of a Mexican restaurant. (R)

2.55

Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. Katie-Louise organises a charity auction to be played out live on the radio. (R)

3.55

Rich House, Poor House. Families from West Sussex and Hampshire swap places for a week. (R)

5.00

5 News Weekend.

5.05

Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away! A pair of pensioners in Oxfordshire struggle to pay off a £4,000 legal bill. (R)

6.00

Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away! Gareth and Craig investigate a case of mistaken identity in Shropshire, then in south Wales find themselves embroiled in a bitter dispute between two dog owners over a vet's bill. (R)

7.00

Cricket on 5. England v India. Mark Nicholas presents action from the second game in the three-match one-day series, which took place at Lord's.

8.00

Les Dawson: A Life of Laughter. Remembering the stand-up comedian, TV host, and celebrated piano player who died in 1993, with archive material and anecdotes from family, friends and colleagues. (R)

10.00

Comedy Gold: Les Dawson and Friends. A selection of clips featuring the much-loved comedian.

11.20

French and Saunders: 30 Years of Laughs. A celebration of the careers of Dawn French and Jennifer Saunders, in particular their work as a double-act. Contributors include Helen Lederer and Christopher Biggins. (R)

12.15

SuperCasino. Live interactive gaming.

3.10

The A-Team. The gang helps a terrorised peace-loving group. (R)

4.00

GP's: Behind Closed Doors. A woman who donated a kidney to her sister has her surgical wounds cleaned. (R)

4.45

House Doctor. (R)

5.10

Great Artists. (R)

5.35

Wildlife SOS. (R)

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Poldark
9pm
Sam convinces Drake to return from exile following his abandonment of Rosina, and Nathaniel Pearce's death reveals how he embezzled Pascoe's clients' funds.



The Misadventures of Romesh Ranganathan
9pm
The comedian tests his preconceptions of Albania, guided on a whistlestop tour of the country by local TV presenter and journalist Erjona Rusi.



Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs
6.30pm
Paul and the staff try an unconventional technique to calm down an over-excited mongrel, and a young German shepherd turns out to have hidden health problems.



The Handmaid's Tale
9pm
The Waterfords embark on a diplomatic trip abroad, and Serena Joy faces the temptation of life outside Gilead. Luke and Moira grapple with survivor's guilt, while Offred seeks support from allies.



Titanic: Draining the Wreck
6.55pm
Using comprehensive mapping data, this programme follows the most dynamic and comprehensive look at Titanic to date, observing the creation of a 3D map of the ship's remains.

BBC1	
6.00	Breakfast. Presented by Roger Johnson and Babita Sharma.
9.00	The Andrew Marr Show. A round-up of the week's stories, featuring interviews with key figures in politics and current affairs.
10.00	Sunday Morning Live. Sean Fletcher and Cherry Healey are joined by a panel of guests to discuss the big talking points from the week.
11.00	Sunday Politics West Midlands. The week's events at Westminster, presented by Sarah Smith. Including a regional round-up.
12.10	Songs of Praise. Pam Rhodes is in Walsingham, Norfolk. Katherine Jenkins spends the day with Brother David on Caldey Island and Sean Fletcher joins pilgrims travelling to Mont St Michel in Normandy.
12.45	BBC News; Weather.
1.00	Wimbledon 2018. Sue Barker presents the build-up to the men's singles final on the famous Centre Court at the All England Club.
1.50	Wimbledon 2018. Sue Barker presents live coverage of the men's singles final at the All England Club, as the 13th and final day of competition draws to a close on the famous grass courts.
3.00	MOTD Live: FIFA World Cup Final Build Up. A look ahead to the final at Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow, profiling the two teams involved and looking at their route to the showpiece match.
3.50	MOTD Live: FIFA World Cup 2018. Coverage of the final (Kick-off 4.00pm), which comes from Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow, as France or Belgium face England or Croatia.
6.35	BBC News.
6.50	Midlands Today; Weather.
7.00	Countryfile. Sean Fletcher presents a special programme on Wales, spelling out what he loves so much about the country, including archive footage exploring the Seven Wonders of Wales.
8.00	Antiques Roadshow. Fiona Bruce presents the show from Minehead Railway Station, where items brought in include a chair thought to have once belonged to Henry VIII and a 19th-century washing machine.
9.00	Poldark. Sam convinces Drake to return from exile following his abandonment of Rosina, and Nathaniel Pearce's death reveals how he embezzled Pascoe's clients' funds.
10.00	BBC News.
10.20	Midlands Today; Weather.
10.30	MOTD: FIFA World Cup 2018 Highlights. Action from the final, which came from Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow, as the champions were crowned in the 21st staging of the tournament.
11.00	Today at Wimbledon. Clare Balding and guests look back at highlights of the men's singles final, where the third Grand Slam title of the year was set to be decided.
12.00	MOTD: FIFA World Cup 2018 Replay. Another chance to see the final, which came from Luzhniki Stadium in Moscow, as the sport's most prestigious match took place and the successors to Germany were crowned.
1.45	Weather for the Week Ahead.
1.50	BBC News.

BBC2	
6.00	A to Z of TV Gardening. Carol Kirkwood looks at themes beginning with the letter B. (R)
6.45	Glorious Gardens from Above. Christine Walkden visits the gardens of Staffordshire. (R)
7.30	Gardeners' World. Monty Don has advice on water lilies, planting herbaceous clematis and harvesting potatoes, Nick Bailey talks roses, and Mark Lane reveals how to produce a cottage-style garden. (R)
8.30	Countryfile. Ellie Harrison and Sean Fletcher explore the ground of Hampton Court Palace, home to the last working shire horses in London, which provide a natural alternative to machinery. (R)
9.30	Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. Matt Tebbutt presents highlights from throughout the series, offering viewers a chance to revisit some of their favourite moments from previous years in the kitchen.
11.00	Wimbledon 2018. Live coverage of the men's wheelchair singles final on the 13th and final day of competition at the All England Club.
12.30	Coast. A journey from Cornwall to south Wales. (R)
1.25	RAF 100: Into the Blue. Celebrating the centenary of the Royal Air Force.
1.55	Operation Grand Canyon with Dan Snow. Part two of two. The re-creation of a pioneering expedition. (R)
2.55	Wimbledon 2018. Sue Barker introduces continued live coverage from the All England Club, as the men's singles final reaches its conclusion, followed by the final of the mixed doubles.
8.00	Russia with Simon Reeve. Simon journeys from Crimea to St Petersburg, meeting the owner of a safari park and an inspirational doctor, before joining the fighters at a martial arts club. Last in the series. (R)
9.00	The Misadventures of Romesh Ranganathan. The comedian tests his preconceptions of Albania, guided on a whistlestop tour of the country by local TV presenter and journalist Erjona Rusi. Last in the series.
10.00	Reporting Trump's First Year: The Fourth Estate. Michael Flynn pleads guilty over lying to the FBI, and reporters dig deeper on the obstruction of justice case Robert Mueller might be building. Last in the series.
10.55	That's the Way, A-Ha, A-Ha, Joe Lycett. A performance from the comedian's award-winning live show, recorded at the Duchess Theatre in London's West End. (R)
11.55	Golf: Scottish Open. Eilidh Barbour presents highlights of the final round of the European Tour event at Gullane Golf Club in East Lothian, where Rafa Cabrera Bello entered as the defending champion.
12.55	Sign Zone: Question Time. Topical debate from Dartford, chaired by David Dimbleby. (R)
1.55	Sign Zone: Holby City. Roxanna and Gaskell return to Holby triumphant, Hanssen is pushed to the edge when an unexpected visitor arrives, and Donna makes a surprising alliance. (R)
2.55	This Is BBC2.

ITV	
6.00	CITV: Sooty 6.10 Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids 6.20 Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids 6.35 Dino Dana 6.50 Mission Employable 6.55 The Oddbods Show 7.05 NinjaGo: Tournament of Elements 7.30 The Haunted Hathaways 7.55 Drop Dead Weird
8.25	ITV News.
8.30	Zoe Ball on Sunday. With Robert Lindsay.
9.25	Japandemonium. A review of the best Japanese TV. (R)
9.55	The Voice Kids. Return of the junior version of the talent contest, presented by Emma Willis. (R)
11.25	Midsomer Murders. Human skeletons are unearthed. (R)
1.25	ITV News and Weather; Weather.
1.30	You've Been Framed! Gold. A squirrel steals a mobile. (R)
2.00	The Chase. Quiz show, hosted by Bradley Walsh. (R)
2.55	FIFA World Cup 2018: Final Build Up. A look ahead to the 21st staging of the showpiece match.
3.45	FIFA World Cup 2018. Mark Pougatch presents coverage of the final (Kick-off 4.00pm).
6.30	Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs. Paul and the staff try an unconventional technique to calm down an over-excited mongrel, and a young German shepherd turns out to have hidden health problems. (R)
7.00	ITV News and Weather.
7.15	ITV News Central; Weather.
7.30	The Voice Kids. Emma Willis hosts the latest stage of the junior talent contest, as Will.i.am, Danny Jones and Pixie Lott give more youngsters aged from seven to 14 a chance at stardom.
9.00	Unforgotten. New series. The body of a teenage girl who went missing at the turn of the millennium is found at a building site off the M1. Nicola Walker and Sanjeev Bhaskar star.
10.00	ITV News and Weather; Weather.
10.15	Rising Damp Forever. Part one of two. Documentary about the classic sitcom, featuring contributions from creator Eric Chappell and star Don Warrington, who revisit the studio where the show was filmed. (R)
11.15	Rising Damp Forever. Part two of two. The crew of the sitcom and star Don Warrington are reunited, while director Joe McGrath and actor Christopher Straull discuss making the movie version. (R)
12.15	The Big Fish Off. Former footballer Wayne Bridge and ex-rugby union star Kyran Bracken join the angling challenge. (R)
1.10	Jackpot247. Viewers get the chance to participate in live interactive gaming from the comfort of their sofas, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team.
3.00	Motorsport UK. Action from Oulton Park. (R)
3.50	British Superbike Championship Highlights. Action from Knockhill. (R)
4.40	ITV Nightshift. Text-based information service.
5.05	The Jeremy Kyle Show. The host invites guests to air their differences over family and relationship issues, and provides them with his own brand of no-nonsense advice. (R)

Channel 4	
6.10	The King of Queens. Carrie and Doug fall out. (R)
6.35	Everybody Loves Raymond. Ray uncovers a shocking secret. (R)
7.00	Everybody Loves Raymond. Debra helps plan a recruitment party. (R)
7.25	Frasier. The psychiatrist hires a bodyguard. (R)
7.55	Frasier. The Cranes go on a fishing trip. (R)
8.25	Bake Off: The Professionals. Liam Charles and Tom Allen host the final of the culinary contest. Last in the series. (R)
9.30	Sunday Brunch. Guests include Kevin McNally and Alex Jennings.
12.30	The Simpsons. Homer becomes head of the local Mafia. (R)
1.00	The Simpsons. Bart becomes a jazz drummer. (R)
1.25	The Simpsons. With the guest voice of Kiefer Sutherland. (R)
1.55	FILM: A Monster in Paris (2011). Animated comedy, with the voice of Vanessa Paradis.
3.40	Location, Location, Location. Kirstie Allsopp goes property hunting in the suburb of Heaton in Newcastle. (R)
4.40	Kirstie and Phil's Love It or List It. Kirstie Allsopp and Phil Spencer meet the Farhalls in Windsor. (R)
5.40	The Secret Life of the Zoo. Orangutan sisters Emma and Subis are due to give birth at the same time. (R)
6.40	Channel 4 News.
7.00	George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. In this treehouse special, George rediscovers some of the best tiny builds to be found up in the treetops across the world, including a romantic retreat in Tuscany.
8.00	Dunkirk: The Forgotten Heroes. The untold story of what happened after the Dunkirk evacuation, told by the men who were there and using recently declassified secret documents.
9.00	The Handmaid's Tale. The Waterfords embark on a diplomatic trip abroad, and Serena Joy faces the temptation of life outside Gilead.
10.15	FILM: Hell or High Water (2016). Premiere. A divorced father and his ex-con older brother resort to a desperate scheme in order to save their family's ranch in West Texas. Drama, starring Jeff Bridges.
12.15	The Last Leg. Adam Hills, Josh Widdimbe and Alex Brooker are joined by celebrity guests for a comic review of the significant moments of the past seven days. (R)
1.10	News Crack. Satirical comedy. (R)
1.35	FILM: Wuthering Heights (2011). A homeless boy taken in by a Yorkshire farming family develops an obsessive lifelong bond with his adoptive sister. Period drama, with James Howson and Kaya Scodelario.
3.50	Mobile 1: The Grid. Bentley attack America's most famous hill climb at Pikes Peak in Colorado. (R)
4.20	My Kitchen Rules. Sisters from Malvern in the West Midlands compete in the culinary contest. (R)
5.15	Kirstie's Vintage Gems. Kirstie Allsopp creates a 1950s-style playroom. (R)
5.35	Star Boot Sale. Tattoo Fixers' Paisley Billings tries to raise money for charity. (R)

Channel 5	
6.00	Milkshake!: Little Princess 6.10 Wisper 6.20 Poppy Cat 6.30 Milkshake! Monkey 6.35 The Secret Life of Puppies 6.40 Seaside Antics 6.45 Olly the Little White Van 6.50 Simon 7.00 Peppa Pig 7.05 Paw Patrol 7.15 Thomas & Friends 7.30 Fireman Sam 7.50 Rusty Rivets 7.55 Paw Patrol 8.15 Pirata & Capitano 8.35 Noddy: Toyland Detective 8.50 Floogals 9.00 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom 9.10 Shimmer and Shine 9.30 Digby Dragon 9.45 Peppa Pig 9.55 Peppa Pig
10.00	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.
10.35	FIA Formula E.
11.20	Police Interceptors. (R)
12.10	Police Interceptors. A 20-strong team raids two houses linked to a suspected drug dealer. (R)
1.10	Police Interceptors. The unit assists with an emergency landing. (R)
2.10	Police Interceptors. Kev Salter and Ian Squire hunt for a man roaming the streets with a machete. (R)
3.10	Windsor Castle: The Queen's Favourite Home - Part One. Events that shaped the monarchy between 1952 and 1972. (R)
4.10	Windsor Castle: The Queen's Favourite Home - Part Two. The life of the Queen and her family between 1972 and 1992. (R)
5.05	St Paul's: Secrets of the Great Cathedral. Documentary examining one of London's most recognised landmarks. (R)
6.00	Westminster Abbey: Inside Britain's Most Famous Church. Cameras look inside the 11th-century church, that has been the final resting place for 17 monarchs and hosted 16 royal weddings, including the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's. (R)
6.55	Titanic: Draining the Wreck. Using comprehensive mapping data, this programme follows the most dynamic and comprehensive look at Titanic to date, observing the creation of a 3D map of the ship's remains. (R)
7.55	Deep-Sea Super Predator. Documentary about a mysterious super-predator so large and aggressive that it can hunt down and devour a three-metre-long great white shark. (R)
8.55	5 News Weekend.
9.00	FILM: Wrath of the Titans (2012). Ancient Greek demi-god Perseus must defeat a race of monsters that have escaped from the underworld. Fantasy adventure sequel, starring Sam Worthington and Liam Neeson.
10.05	5 News Update.
10.10	FILM: Wrath of the Titans (2012). Concluded.
11.05	FILM: The Legend of Hercules (2014). The son of a Greek god is sold into slavery by his evil stepfather, but escapes to reclaim his rightful kingdom. Mythological adventure, with Kellan Lutz and Gaia Weiss.
12.05	Access.
12.10	FILM: The Legend of Hercules (2014). Concluded.
12.55	SuperCasino.
3.10	The A-Team. (R)
4.00	Tribal Teens. (R)
4.45	House Doctor. (R)
5.10	Great Scientists. (R)
5.35	Wildlife SOS. (R)

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Attractive to fleet and private buyers

By Graham Breeze

SEAT has continued an incredible run of sales records and has become the fastest-growing volume car brand in the UK so far this year.

There's a small crisis going on in the UK car industry with overall car sales declining so far this year in the UK by 8.8 per cent but SEAT is bucking the trend, boasting an impressive 14 per cent upturn, selling 2,997 more vehicles than by the same time last year.

So when the Ibiza 1.0TSi 95PS FR was named Best Value Car at the annual Company Car of the Year awards it was time to take a look at what all the fuss was about.

Potential

SEAT has been building a presence in the small fleet sector so success is really no surprise when you consider excellent running costs, low company car taxation and an inviting four-day test drive programme for potential business buyers.

The Volkswagen Group chose the Ibiza to debut the latest platform tech called MQB AO, which also features in Polo and will be used on Skoda Fabia and Audi A1. It means the vehicle feels bigger and sounds a lot quieter than you would expect from a 1.0litre, three-cylinder engine. And what's attracting the fleet buyer is the outstanding levels of safety equipment, connectivity and luxury add-ons that you would expect to pay a lot more for.

The range topping FR which was tested gets bags more than you would expect. There's automatic braking and pedestrian detection, adaptive cruise control, mobile phone charging, LED lights, Apple Car Play and



An eight-inch screen dominates the dash

Android Auto and even a flashing reminder to remove your mobile phone.

Independent McPherson front suspension and a semi-rigid rear axle with coiled springs and hydraulic shock absorbers mean the ride is comfortable enough – though a perhaps “over-picky” passenger complained it was too hard.

You soon recognise the three-cylinder drone that the 1.0litre engine produces around town but once out on the open road it's quiet and smooth, with plenty of performance to match.

Consider you have a top speed of 113mph and 0-62 in 10.9 seconds and you'll see what I mean about performance levels.

And you soon see what's attracting the cash-strapped fleet buyer too, when you get 57.6mpg on the combined cycle and CO2 figures of 106g/km.

Using the MQB AO platform means the Ibiza becomes 2mm shorter but wheelbase is extended by 95mm, giving much more space



There are outstanding levels of safety equipment, connectivity and luxury add-ons you would expect to pay a lot more for

inside where rear legroom is upped by 35mm and there's a god sized boot at 355litres.

Most buyers will opt for the SE model which means they get an eight-inch colour screen which dominates the dash.

The screen neatly houses most of the controls but is extremely touch-sensitive – in

fact annoying sensitive. It's not all good news in the cabin either.

There's a complete lack of handle grabs to help passenger or driver in and out and no sight at all of hangers for clothes which didn't go down too well with her indoors when setting off on a weekend trip.

The Ibiza is only available in five-door format and the model tested hit the road at £17,235. Metallic paint, rear parking sensors and dual zone climate control pushed that up to £18,318 but the attraction to the fleet market is obvious and will also attract more than enough private buyers.

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Diesel Selection	
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15 (15) VAUXHALL MERIVA 1.6 CDTI TECH LINE White, 11,000 miles only	£8,995
14 (14) FORD MONDEO 1.6CDTI GRAPHITE Silver	£9,850
14 (63) RENAULT CLIO 1.5 DCI DYNAMIQUE M-NAV Flame Red	£8,975
15 (15) Nissan QASHQAI, 1.5 DCI Acenta, 18,000 miles	£11,995
13 (13) KIA CARENS 3, 1.7 CRDI, EcoDynamics	DUE IN
13 (63) VAUXHALL MOKKA 1.7 CDTI Exclusive Grey	£11,850
13 (13) NISSAN JUKE1.5DCI Acenta PREMIUM White	DUE IN
12 (62) PEUGEOT 5008 1.6 HDI ACTIVE Silver	£8,950
12 (12) SEAT IBIZA 1.2 TDI SE ECOMOTIVE Grey	£7,250
12 (12) PEUGEOT 207, 1.6 HDI SPORT, in Black	£5,450
11 (11) VAUXHALL INSIGNIA 2.0 CDTI Exclusive, Estate, in White	£4,950
11 (11) NISSAN QASHQAI 1.5 DCI Acenta Force Red	£8,950
10 (10) BMW 118D SPORT, 5 door, white	DUE IN
10 (10) RENAULT MEGANE 1.5 DCI EXPRESSION Silver	£6,850
10 (10) RENAULT MEGANE 1.5 DCI EXPRESSION Pearl Black	£6,850
09 (09) PEUGEOT PARTNER, 1.6 HDI, in red	DUE IN
08 (08) VOLKSWAGEN JETTA 2.0 TDI SPORT Lovely Condition, Blue	£6,850
08 (08) VW GOLF 1.9TDI S, 5 Door, in Silver	DUE IN
05 (55) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.9 CDTI DESIGN Black	£3,250
Petrol Selection	
15 (15) KIA CARENS 4, 1.25, 5 door, Silver	DUE IN
09 (59) TOYOTA YARIS, 1.3 TR, VVTi, 5 door, Silver	£4,950
17 (66) PEUGEOT 208 1.2 Active, 9,000 miles, Shark Grey	£9,450
17 (17) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA TOURER 1.4T, SRI, in silver, 7,000 miles	DUE IN
16 (66) KIA PICANTO 1.0L Air, 5 door, Blaze Red	£7,850
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52 JAGUAR S TYPE AUTO Leather, Low Miles	£3995
V JAGUAR XKB Low Mileage, Silver, MUST BE SEEN	£70A
07 JAGUAR S TYPE 2.7TD Auto, Blue, Leather	£4495
08 JAGUAR XF SPORT, 2.7 TD Auto, Champagne Met, leather, 50K	£8975
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16 VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6 CDTI 136 Techline, Grey Met, 8k	£12,795
11 NISSAN QASHQAI Acenta, 51k, Deep Red Met	£7,650
16 VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.6 CDTI 136 Techline, Grey Met, 8k	SOLD
14 FORD FOCUS ZETEC, NAVIGATOR, Auto, Black, 26k,	£7,995
11 NISSAN QASHQAI Acenta, 51k, Deep Red Met	£7,650
08 VW JETTA SE TD 140, Black Service History	SOLD
61 BMW 730d, M SPORT AUTO 3.0 DIESEL, stunning looks, Auto	£13875
60 VW Polo 1.2, 5 door, Silver, low mileage	£4499
06 VAUXHALL ZAFIRA Active, low mileage, beautiful car	SOLD
09 VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 3 door, Coupe, 1.6, Silver	£2925
56 TOYOTA YARIS T SPIRIT 1.3, Silver, Beautiful Condition, MP3 Player	£8175
54 FORD FIESTA FLAME S-dr, Silver	£2495
08 FIAT PUNTO Sporting T Jet	£2495
07 FORD FIESTA Style TDCi, low tax	£1995
07 RENAULT CLIO, Campus, Silver, 3 door	£1685
03 TOYOTA YARIS, colour collection, 3 door	£1295
4x4/ COMMERCIALS	
52 VAUXHALL CORSA AUTO, Red, only 33k miles	£1,225
03 FORD STREET KA Blue Convertible	£1795
04 VAUXHALL TIGRA SPORT, Silver	£1295
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03 NISSAN ALMERA, new MOT	£950
51 VAUXHALL COMBO VAN	£850

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BRAKES CLUTCH SUSPENSION

Practical with surprising dose of style

By Ryan Hiron

The van-turned-MPV has been a mainstay in the market for a number of years now – if one that has been dwindling for a while.

The PSA Group – consisting of Peugeot, Citroen and now Opel/Vauxhall – has been right at the forefront of this particular game for some time with the big-selling Peugeot Partner Tepee and Citroen Berlingo twins, and it's not giving up the ghost just yet. A new wave of these machines is on the horizon, and this is the first – the Peugeot Rifter.

With the ever-growing presence of SUVs though, does buying a van-based MPV still make sense in 2018?

Although the concept of a van-MPV is nothing new, the Rifter itself is a pretty fresh machine. In fact, it's a new name – replacing the old Partner Tepee in the range and distancing itself from the Partner van it's based on.

It's got a new look as well – taking on Peugeot's most recent corporate design. Inside the cabin, the firm's stylish i-Cockpit cabin also makes an appearance.

As for engine options, there's a choice of powertrains plucked from the rest of PSA's range – namely PureTech 110 and 130 petrol engines, along with BlueHDi diesels in 75, 100 and 130 guises.

We took the helm of a Rifter powered by the BlueHDi 130 unit – a 1.5-litre engine delivering 128bhp and 221Nm of torque, here paired up to an eight-speed automatic gearbox. No official word on 0-60mph times.

As for efficiency, Peugeot claims 65.7mpg is possible on the combined cycle with CO2 emissions of 114g/km.

Don't expect it to be the last word in



There's a 775-litre load capacity

performance, but the diesel engine provides ample power to cart around the Rifter without ever feeling asthmatic. Gear changes from the automatic 'box also feel seamless and, despite the van roots, there's little noise from the engine itself – allowing for a relaxing ride.

The Peugeot Rifter was never destined to be a serious driver's car, but the experience behind the wheel is a little less than stellar – its van roots shine through all too well.

Steering falls on the light side yet the Rifter requires a ton of input at low speed to navigate around relatively tight turns, while at higher speeds body roll is incredibly present – perhaps to be expected for such a tall machine.

Style isn't the name of the game in this market segment, but the Rifter is a pretty good-looking thing in its own right. The introduction of Peugeot's corporate style pays off here – with the angular language sitting well on the van dimensions.

Compared with SUVs – even those from



Style isn't the name of the game in this market segment, but the Rifter is a pretty good-looking thing in its own right

Peugeot – it's not a fashion icon but does manage to pack genuine practicality into a good-looking package.

Step into the driver's seat and you'll be greeted by the firm's i-Cockpit cabin which is slowly but surely taking over its entire range. It brings a high-positioned instrument cluster, eight-inch touchscreen infotainment system (on Allure and higher models) along with a compact, race car-esque steering wheel to create an encapsulated feel.

Looking for pure practicality? We're glad

to report the Rifter offers tons of that. The three rear seats all feature Isofix mounting points meaning all the kids can come along for the ride in child seats, while a 775-litre load capacity with all seats in place means you can fit more than enough for a family week away in the back with ease. Still not enough? A seven-seat version will be landing in the UK in 2019.

Pricing for the full range has yet to be confirmed, but the GT-Line BlueHDi 130 as tested will be available from £24,220. For the money, equipment on offer includes keyless

start, automatic dual-zone climate control, satellite navigation and tons of gloss black exterior highlights to bring a stylish edge – on top of LED daytime running lights, an eight-inch infotainment system with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto support amongst others.

The Rifter manages to bring a hint of style to a segment often not associated with it, while retaining the practicality and daily usability MPV buyers will be hoping to expect – and although it may struggle to hide its roots as a van, we can forgive that.

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Cricket League

Premier Division 1st XI

	P	W	D	L	T	A	P
Berkswell	11	5	3	2	0	1	173
WB Dartmouth	11	6	2	2	0	1	165
Shrewsbury	11	5	2	3	0	1	164
Smethwick	11	5	3	2	0	1	156
Knowle & D.	11	6	1	3	0	1	155
Moseley	11	5	1	5	0	1	139
Kenilworth W.	11	4	3	3	0	1	135
Walsall	11	3	3	4	0	1	110
Ombersley	11	3	2	5	0	1	109
Dorridge	11	3	1	6	0	1	104
Barnet Green	11	2	2	6	0	1	97
Wolverhampton	11	1	1	8	0	1	67

Division One 1st XI

	P	W	D	L	T	A	P
Kidderminster	11	7	1	3	0	1	167
Shifnal	11	6	2	3	0	1	157
Tamworth	11	7	0	3	0	1	156
Bridgnorth	11	5	1	5	0	1	145
Oswestry	11	4	2	4	0	1	142
Halesowen	11	3	3	4	0	1	135
Barnards Green	11	5	2	3	0	1	131
Himley	11	4	3	3	0	1	126
Bromsgrove	11	4	1	5	0	1	125
Leamington	11	3	4	4	0	1	125
Brockhampton	11	3	0	7	0	1	103
Wellington	11	2	1	8	0	1	64

Division Two 1st XI

	P	W	D	L	T	A	P
Walmley	11	6	1	3	0	1	153
Attok	11	5	1	4	0	1	151
C & R Hawks	11	6	1	3	0	1	150
Sutton Coldfield	11	5	2	3	0	1	148
Harborne	11	4	2	4	0	1	145
Penkridge	11	4	2	3	1	1	136
Coventry & N.W.	11	5	2	3	0	1	134
Fordhouses	11	4	0	6	1	1	133
Pershore	11	3	4	3	0	1	124
Wombourne	11	4	1	6	0	1	122
Streatly	11	3	1	6	0	1	100
Astwood Bank	11	2	1	7	0	1	85

Division Three 1st XI

	P	W	D	L	T	A	P
Stourbridge	11	8	2	0	1	1	200
Rugby	11	7	0	3	0	1	163
Stratford-u-Avon	11	6	2	2	0	1	159
Old Hill	11	6	1	3	0	1	150
Lichfield	11	5	0	6	0	1	139
Radcliff	11	4	1	5	0	1	138
Pelsall	11	5	1	4	0	1	137
Handsworth	11	5	0	4	0	1	132
Newport	11	3	1	6	0	1	103
Old Elizabethans	11	3	0	7	0	1	85
Milford Hall	11	2	0	8	0	1	75
Whitchurch	11	1	2	0	9	1	70

Premier Division 2nd XI

	P	W	D	L	T	A	P
Leamington	11	8	1	0	1	1	187
Shifnal	11	8	1	1	0	1	187
Wolverhampton	11	7	0	2	0	1	167
Kenilworth W.	11	6	1	2	0	1	162
Knowle & D.	11	4	3	3	0	1	140
Attok	11	3	3	4	0	1	131
Tamworth	11	2	5	1	1	1	128
Harborne	11	2	4	4	0	1	109
Walmley	11	3	2	5	0	1	107
Brockhampton	11	2	1	7	0	1	81
Moseley	11	2	2	6	0	1	78
Himley	11	1	0	9	0	1	57

Division One 2nd XI

	P	W	D	L	T	A	P
Bromsgrove	11	8	1	1	0	1	196
Halesowen	11	8	0	2	0	1	182
WB Dartmouth	11	6	0	4	0	1	148
Coventry & N.W.	11	5	2	3	0	1	142
Ombersley	11	5	1	4	0	1	139
Walsall	11	6	0	5	0	1	139
Astwood Bank	11	5	0	5	1	1	132
Barnet Green	11	3	4	0	1	1	120
Penkridge	11	3	2	5	0	1	118
Wombourne	11	3	2	6	0	1	118
Shrewsbury	11	2	1	7	0	1	91
Pershore	11	1	0	9	0	1	49

Division Two 2nd XI (N)

	P	W	D	L	T	A	P
Bridgnorth	11	9	2	0	0	1	228
Fordhouses	11	8	0	0	0	1	221
Pelsall	11	6	1	3	0	1	155
Milford Hall	11	6	2	2	0	1	154
Smethwick	11	4	2	4	0	1	147
Wellington	11	4	2	4	0	1	137
C & R Hawks	11	3	2	5	0	1	113
Old Hill	11	2	4	0	1	1	107
Oswestry	11	2	2	7	0	1	82
Lichfield	11	2	2	6	0	1	82
Whitchurch	11	0	1	0	8	1	35
Newport	11	1	0	9	0	1	33

Henshalls Shropshire County

Cricket League

Premier

	P	W	D	L	C/A	B	P
Quatt	11	8	1	1	1	1	7 193
Wern	10	8	0	1	1	1	7 184
Madley	11	7	0	4	0	1	20 168
Sentinel	11	6	0	3	0	1	158
Bomere Heath	11	5	0	4	2	1	152
Worfield	10	5	0	5	0	1	27 127
Ludlow	11	4	1	6	0	1	40 121
Newtown	11	4	0	7	0	1	29 108
St Georges	10	2	1	7	2	1	37 94
Frankton	11	2	1	7	2	1	92
Cound	11	1	1	8	1	1	42 73

Division 1

	P	W	D	L	C/A	B	P
Allscott	12	9	2	1	1	1	22 237
Shelton	12	7	1	3	1	1	27 199
Pontesbury	12	8	0	3	1	1	10 198
Knockin & Kinnerley	12	8	0	3	1	1	19 197
Alberbury	12	6	0	5	1	1	18 152
Wrocester & Uppington	12	4	1	7	0	1	42 138
Albrighton	12	4	1	7	0	1	27 121
Forton	12	3	2	6	1	1	42 120
Welshpool	12	4	1	6	1	1	25 119
Condover	10	2	0	7	2	1	31 104
Market Drayton	12	0	2	11	1	1	23 14

Division 2

	P	W	D	L	C/A	B	P
Ellesmere	12	8	2	2	0	1	24 224
Montgomery	12	8	1	1	2	1	14 197
Shifnal	12	7	1	2	2	1	14 169
Lliffeshall	12	6	1	4	1	1	26 168
Willy	12	5	1	4	2	1	33 153



Former England and Wolves striker Steve Bull presented the trophies at AFC Bridgnorth's under-18s presentation night. Wolves legend Bull was a special guest at the club in Bridgnorth, where he presented the silverware to the players. ■ Pic: Ted Gallagher.

Ludlow	12	5	1	6	0	1	32 152
Church Aston	12	5	3	3	1	1	27 146
Wellington	12	4	2	5	1	1	37 142
Wheaton Aston	12	4	2	6	0	1	42 139
Church Stretton	12	4	1	6	1	1	39 138
Bishops Castle	12	2	0	8	2	1	37 75
Shrewsbury	12	0	1	11	0	1	40 12

Bomere Heath	10	3	1	4	2	1	21 91
Wellington	10	2	1	6	1	1	34 84
Ludlow	10	4	0	6	0	1	11 80
Oswestry	10	4	1	4	1	1	13 78
Alberbury	10	3	1	5	1	1	21 73

North Staffs & South Cheshire

Cricket League

Premier

	P	W	D	L	C/A	B	P
Porthill Park	11	5	0	1	19	16	223
Blythe CC, Staffs - 1st XI	11	2	1	16	11	1	196
Checkley	11	4	1	1	14	13	196
J G Meakin	11	3	1	2	25	22	193
Stone SP	11	1	1	1	23	16	169
Elworth	11	0	2	2	14	15	159
Longton	11	1	3	1	29	24	147
Aschcombe Park	11	4	0	2	22	14	146
Hem Heath	11	1	1	1	30	17	118
Burslem	11	1	5	0	21	31	117
Leek	11	1	3	0	33	27	113
Whitmore	11	1	3	0	34	23	104

	P	W	D	L	C/A	B	P
Trysull & Seisdon	10	8	0	2	0	7	175
Bridgnorth	9	7	1	0	1	8	170
Harcourt	10	6	0	2	2	9	143
Guildfield	9	5	1	2	1	17	138
Wood Lane	10	4	2	5	0	1	105
Colum	10	3	2	5	0	1	101
Quayside	10	2	1	6	1	25	81
Coton Hall	10	1	2	7	0	36	66
Llanidloes	10	3	0	6	1	18	62
Beacon	10	0	1	7	2	29	36

	P	W	D	L	C/A	B	P
Worfield	11	8	2	1	0	1	25 209
Sentinel	11	8	1	0	1	1	202
St Georges	10	7	1	2	0	13	169
Alberbury	11	4	1	4	2	25	131
Frankton	10	5	0	5	0	21	125
Wern	10	4	1	5	0	36	124
Shelton	11	4	0	6	1	18	109
Quayside	11	3	2	5	0	31	101
Wellington	11	3	0	5	1	28	94
Montgomery	11	2	0	7	2	30	82
Knockin & Kinnerley	11	1	1	8	1	41	68

	P	W	D	L	C/A	B	P
Beacon	12	7	1	3	1	20	180
Newtown	12	7	1	3	1	18	175
Madley	12	5	2	3	2	34	166
Lliffeshall	12	6	2	4	1	20	156
Acton Reynald	12	6	0	5	1	21	152
Willey	12	5	2	4	1	29	146
Cound	12	5	2	4	1	21	138
Ludlow	12	4	0	6	2	28	126
Bomere Heath	12	4	2	5	1	28	117
Alberbury	12	6	0	4	1	17	93
Allscott	12	1	1	9	1	50	84
Shifnal	12	2	0	8	2	24	57

Meir Heath.....	11	2	3	2	18	17	15
Bignall End.....	11	1	3	0	19	23	13
Stafford.....	11	2	3	1	23	17	12
Leycett.....	11	1	4	0	22	32	8
J G Meakin.....	11	1	3	0	25	26	8

Division 3

	P	W	D	L	C/A	B	P
Pontesbury	11	8	1	1	1	12	195
Ellesmere	11	6	0	2	3	9	148
Forton	11	5	2	3	1	26	146
Allscott	10	5	2	3	0	26	138
St Georges	12	6	0	4	1	17	93
Quatt	10	4	1	4	1	31	131
Albrighton	10	4	3	3	0	33	128
Welshpool	10	4	1	4	1	21	112
Ludlow	10	3	2	4	1	15	107
Much Wenlock	10	3	1	5	1	24	96
Iscoyd & Fenns Bank	11	2	1	6	1	36	94
Ca							



Development Club of the Year winners Shrewsbury Up & Comers



Prees Juniors were toasting a double success on the night



Dave Simpson, Hodge and Outstanding Contribution winner Vince Lunn

Hodge on hand to dish out the awards

By Joe Edwards

THE excellent efforts of volunteers across the county were celebrated and recognised at the Shropshire FA Community Awards.

Held at the Lord Hill Hotel in Shrewsbury, 12 gongs were given out to coaches, clubs and referees.

Former England, Tottenham, Nottingham Forest and Aston Villa star Steve Hodge was the guest of honour and presented each award.

The first of the night, for Outstanding Contribution to Sunday Football, went to Vince Lunn – who founded Celtic Spartans in 1989 and remains their club secretary.

They have been in the Telford Sunday League since 1994, and Lunn is in his 38th year as a grassroots volunteer.

John Edge, club secretary at Ellesmere Rangers, was the winner of the Outstanding Contribution to Adult Football prize.

He has been in the role for more than 30 years, previously serving as manager, and has also served as vice-chairman of the Shropshire County League.

Stalwart

Shropshire FA chairman Dave Simpson said: "I started out with Vince in 1980. You see these large football clubs, Shrewsbury Juniors being one, but that guy is a one-man outfit – and still wears his football boots now."

"He supports clubs financially and is an unbelievable man, but nobody knew about him."

"It's the same for John Edge, an absolute stalwart. Without them, these clubs would not run – they would fall apart."

Dawley FC were named Sunday Football Club of the Year after completing a treble – winning the Telford Sunday League, the league's Challenge Cup and the TJ Vickers Sunday Senior Cup.

Grange Park Primary School got Best Inclusive Project of the Year after setting up two new girls football leagues for year three/four and year five/six pupils. All schools in Telford and Wrekin can enter those leagues next season.



Shrewsbury Juniors were joint winners of the FA Charter Standard Community Club of the Year award

Stuart Lewis, from Randlay Colts, received the Coach of the Year gong, while NC United – which has grown rapidly since its formation in May 2015 – received the coveted FA Charter Standard Club of the Year award.

Prees Juniors – who are a sister club to Manchester City Ladies and have City and England midfielder Jill Scott hold her soccer schools at their base – got two awards.

They shared FA Community Club of the Year with Shrewsbury Juniors, and also won Respect Club of the Year.

FA Charter Standard League of the Year went to the Shropshire Junior League, and FA Charter Standard Development Club of the Year to Shrewsbury Up and Comers.

Daniel Thomas was rewarded for his stellar work over the past two seasons at Wem Town, receiving Young Volunteer of the Year. And perhaps the loudest cheer of the

night was for Regan Gough, who won the Referee of the Year gong.

Gough regularly referees in the Shropshire Junior League, Shropshire Girls and Women's League, Central Warwickshire Girls League and Shropshire Schools Association – and has also served as an assistant referee in the Shropshire County League.

After the awards were given out, Hodge ran through his storied career – what it was like playing under the late Brian Clough at Forest, and his involvement in Diego Maradona's infamous 'Hand of God' at the 1986 World Cup.

Simpson also shared his experience of being out in India last year as an FA representative when England Under-17s won the World Cup.

He added: "The people we have recognised are at the elite end of volunteers – the cream of the crop. What we have to under-

stand, though, is there are people as good in the county, there seven days a week.

"We're going to expand the presentation next year. We're going to be looking at more volunteers in Sunday football."

Winners
Outstanding Contribution to Sunday Football: Vince Lunn

Sunday Football Club of the Year: Dawley FC

Best Inclusive Project of the Year: Grange Park Primary School

Coach of the Year: Stuart Lewis

FA Charter Standard Club of the Year: NC United

FA Charter Standard Development Club of the Year: Shrewsbury Up & Comers

FA Charter Standard Community Club of the Year: Press Juniors and Shrewsbury Juniors

FA Charter Standard League of the Year: Shropshire Junior League

Respect Club of the Year: Prees Juniors

Young Volunteer of the Year: Daniel Thomas

Referee of the Year: Regan Gough

Outstanding Contribution to Adult Football: John Edge



Referee of the Year Regan Gough with Hodge



Stuart Lewis picks up the Coach of the Year



Steve Newman from Dawley FC collects the Sunday Club of the Year award from Hodge



Best Inclusive Project winners Grange Park Primary



Daniel Thomas won the Young Volunteer award



FA Charter Standard Club of the Year NC United



Hodge presents John Edge with his award for Outstanding Contribution to Adult Football

Church are hoping for turnaround in fortunes

DESPITE wins from two of their form players, Church A continue to prop up the Oswestry and District Bowling League division one after slipping to an 8-2 reverse at home to defending champions Ceiriog Valley A.

Defeat left Church adrift at the foot of the table, and facing a battle on their hands to escape the basement places, while their high flying visitors are looking in good shape at the summit.

Steve Williams (21-8) was the best of the night for Church as he chalked up his eighth win in 11 outings, while Ron Crook supplied the other success as he prevailed 20-9 - his ninth win in 13 appearances this term.

But Ceiriog Valley showed their champion credentials as they ran out convincing winners in taking the aggregate by 56 shots (158-102) helped by a 21-3 card from Andrew Pearce.

Llanymynech A, who are also battling to retain their status in the top flight, put up a spirited showing as they drew 5-5 away to Johnstown A.

They could have enjoyed an even greater return had they not lost the aggregate by just five shots (128-123).

Roger Candlin (21-6) was the pick of the winners as Llany stayed just above the two basement places, Clive Roberts also winning to 12.

Whittington A also finished 5-5 at home to second placed Llangollen A after edging the shots by nine (144-135) in a closely fought affair.

The fourth placed villagers were helped by a couple of single figure cards from Mel Morris (21-5) and Ben Hampson (21-9).

Ruabon A cemented third spot after their 7-3 (146-131) home verdict against Flexsys A, while Corwen A overcame lowly visitors Cynwyd A by the same score, taking the aggregate 142-131.

On-song Llanrhaeadr A continue to lead the way in division two after overcoming Church B 7-3 (156-135).

Brian Jones (21-8) produced the best hand of the night, with Adrian Jones (21-16) the pick of the replies as Llan moved seven points clear at the summit, with Church now second bottom.

Weston Rhyn A stayed hard on the heels of the leading pack with a 7-3 (150-129) verdict at home to Ye Olde Crofte A.

Andrew Riley led the way to five, Brian Oakley also a 21-11 victor, while Paul Edwards responded to 11.

George edged away from the basement zone after a closely fought 7-3 success at home to third placed Criffins B in which they took the aggregate by nine (144-135).

Goal machine Thomas signs Welshpool deal

HOT-SHOT Will Thomas has handed Welshpool Town a boost by committing himself for the coming season in the Spar Mid Wales League division one.

The striker netted 41 goals in 39 appearances last season to finish as the league's top scorer.

His decision to stay at Maesdyre is a timely boost after fellow forward Adam Davies left the club.

Davies bagged 31 goals in just 27 appearances last season to finish second in the league's scoring charts, and may be heading to Cymru Alliance neighbours Guilsfield.

Meanwhile, utility man Steve Jones, midfielder Sam Evans and central defender Dan Bowen have all signed for the upcoming season, while forward Josh Morgan has returned to the club after a short spell at Berriew.

Double delight for Monty cricketers

IN-FORM Montgomery pulled off a quickfire double over Hodnet, Peplow & Tibberton to maintain their challenge in the Shropshire Cricket League division two.

Having defeated their rivals two days earlier to lift the league's T20 Junior Slam, Monty notched another win - this time by four wickets to consolidate second spot in the league.

They are now just 27 points behind leaders Ellesmere whose advantage at the top has been trimmed after suffering back-to-back defeats.

Electing to bat first on winning the toss, Hodnet were dismissed for 147 in the 45th over before the in-form visitors got home with 12 overs to spare.

Charlie Kinsey led the attack with 4-43 off eight overs as Hodnet were kept in check, with Harry Wilkinson (2-19) and Andrew Barker (2-33) also giving good support.

Opening bat Richard Barge top scored for the hosts with 34 before becoming one of Kinsey's victims.

Montgomery then made a sold start in reply through opener Thomas Corfield (31) and No3 Tim Davies (30) before Ieuan Griffiths struck an unbeaten 41 to guide his side to their target with relative comfort. Skipper Sam Williams also chipped in with 21.

High-flying ELLESMERE were looking to keep

their distance above Monty after suffering a first defeat the week before, but found themselves edged out by two wickets away to Shifnal III to collect just six points.

Despite 57 from Jack Cockayne, they toiled to 125 all out in the 29th over after being put in the bat, 25 extras helping to swell the total.

Their bowlers hit back, but Matthew Batkin's 37 proved enough to help Shifnal over the line, although a late wobble gave the Meresiders hope.

Meanwhile, CAE GLAS' senior side boosted their hopes of escaping the drop from division three after picking up 24 points when hosts Overton conceded their match.

Ace batter Carrasco is no ordinary Joe

CRICKET by John Bridgwater

JOE Carrasco's unbeaten century steered Oswestry to a terrific five wicket victory at Bridgnorth that lifted them up to fifth spot in the Birmingham League division one.

The opener finished with 103 not out as the Morda Road side chased down the home side's 211 to maintain their excellent run of form.

Without five first team regulars, including injured captain Robbie Clarke, the young Oswestry side pulled off another memorable win with a performance full of character.

Bridgnorth were in all sorts of trouble as they slipped to 107-7 with Rituraj Singh (4-62) and Warrick Fynn (4-50) doing the damage.

At 151-9, Oswestry let matters slip as the home side's 10th wicket pair put put on 60 with Adam Quinney smashing a belligerent 77 to lift the hosts to 211.

Oswestry suffered an early blow when Warrick Fynn was caught behind in the first over, but rallied with a second wicket stand of 106 between Carrasco and Josh Coleridge (44).

Xavier Clarke (16) gave Carrasco good support, as did Singh (19 not out), as Oswestry cruised to a five wicket victory with nine overs to spare.

Carrasco, once again, underlined his ability to bat time and play the "big innings", sending out a reminder to the county selectors.

Something special

Stand in skipper, Dean Suter, who is enjoying an excellent season behind the stumps, was full of praise for his young charges.

"We had our plans and executed them well against a good and experienced batting side," he said "We let it slip a little towards the end of their innings, but our batters did really well. Joe's century was something special."

OSWESTRY II picked up six points after hanging on to secure a losing draw at home to high flying Bridgnorth II in the 2nd XI League division two (north).

The Morda Road hosts were up against it as the league leaders racked up a mighty 310-6 in sweltering conditions with Matthew Martin hitting an unbeaten 104.

Oswestry were soon on the back out in reply, being reduced to 31-4 before Josh Kirk's half century along with 27 from Chris Wiseman helped earn a draw as they closed on 160-9.

Kirk beaming after double win

FINALLY, round nine of the Oswestry Paragon time trials series saw Kirk Vickers become the first rider to win twice this year.

A hot sticky evening with a tricky crosswind made it difficult going for the twenty-eight riders who took to the start line.

It was Rhino Velo RT rider Vickers who crossed the line in 19mins 55secs to take his second consecutive victory. In second place RAF CC rider Ryan Morley admitted to tired legs after riding the National Time Trial Championships the previous day but he still produced a course best time of 20:12.

In third place and fastest junior it was James Sator of Mid Shropshire Wheelers who stopped the clock on 23:04.

This week it was Lee Williams who took maximum points in the season long Paragon competition recording his first sub 24-minute ride of the year, coming home in 23:41 putting him in fourth place overall. Fifth place went to James Dyke of Cardiff Ajax CC in a time of 23:50.

Two more Paragon riders recorded their first sub 24-minute rides this year with Jack Morris(23:52) and Neil Coles (23:57) taking sixth and seventh



The fastest Paragon rider Lee Williams cranks up the power on round nine

place respectively. Eighth place went to Stuart Mitchell of Marches CC (24:19) ahead of Gino Trasatti of North Shropshire Wheelers (24:33).

Rounding off the top ten was Roger Squire of Fibrax-Wrexham RC in 24:48.

Another Wrexham rider Lucy Bulkeley was quickest woman in 30:09 ahead of Paragon junior Lucy Hammonds (31:34).

On-a-roll Ifton are climbing the table

IFTON eased their basement worries in the Salop Leisure Shropshire Premier Bowls League after back-to-back wins propelled them towards mid-table.

After their 10-4 (222-185) success against Bowring the week before, the St Martins side followed it up with another excellent home success as they accounted for Burway 12-2, taking the aggregate by 54 shots (246-192).

That victory lifted them up to a healthy ninth position, well clear of the basement pack, and will put them in good spirits for when they get back on road for Friday night's trip to lowly Chester Road.

Martin Jones led Ifton's charge with the best result of the night as he overcame Len Lewis 21-11, while Sam Williams was a 21-12 victor against Roy Crowther.

Nathan Lacey and Craig Griffiths both came through 21-13, with the latter pulling off his 11th win of the season, while Leighton Roberts made it nine victories this term when prevailing to 14.

In a fine all round team display, Dave Bond notched a 21-15 card, while Ian Metcalfe and Darren Lacey won to 16 and 17 respectively.

Nicky Jones claimed the scalp of Wayne Rogers 21-19 while the closest verdict saw Dicky Jones edge out Russell Davies 21-20.

Best performance for the south Shropshire men came from Kiah Roberts who was a 21-16 winner, while Mark Rogers secured a closely fought 21-20 success for the visitors in the other match of the night.

Newport continue to fly high with their 12-2 (247-157) hammering of Meole Brace keeping them six points clear of Sir John Bayley who swept aside Bowring by a similar scoreline, taking the shots by 70 (238-168), to keep up the pressure.

Castlefields moved up to third, following their 13-1 (250-144) rout of Hanwood, but are still 15 points adrift of second place.

Hammer remain at the foot of the table after losing 11-5 (228-210) at home to Chester Road.

Friday night's fixtures: Bowring v Castlefield, Burway v Hammer, Chester Road v Ifton, Meole Brace v Sir John Bayley, St Georges v Newport, Wrockwardine Wood v Wem USC.

Pool swept away as fine run ended

WELSHPOOL'S winning run in the Shropshire League division one came to an abrupt halt after being downed by nine wickets away to Knockin & Kinnerley.

The Maesdyre side had gone into the encounter on the back of four straight victories, but never recovered after being bowled out for 138 to return with just three points.

Opting to bat first, they found themselves languishing on 13-3 against some fine early bowling from Lawrence Hitchen (4-14).

Skipper Russell Cadwallader steadied the ship with 51, but the rest of the batting fell away as Josh Keys (4-39) cleaned up the tail.

Knockin eased to their target in reply, with Jak Jones making 48 before being bowled by Tom Bowen, while fellow opener Andy Beckett (56no) and Keys (26no) guided them home with time to spare.

KNOCKIN & KINNERLEY III marched on at the top of the Shropshire Sunday League division one after crushing Pontesbury III by 175 runs.

Rhys Williams cracked a century on his debut before being dismissed for 114 as the home side rattled up 271-8 from their 40 overs.

Matthew Tunnadine then picked up 4-30 as Pontesbury were skittled for just 96 in reply, Julian Gallimore also taking 2-3 off five overs.

Ex-TNS man Quigley nets Vale move

FOOTBALL by John Bridgwater

He then went out on loan to National League side Wrexham for whom he netted eight times in 17 appearances.

Quigley, who is Vale's fourth new striker following Louis Dodds, Ricky Miller and Idris Kanu, will link up with his new team-mates at a training camp in Ireland this week.

Wrexham were keen to keep the 6ft 3ins striker after his successful loan spell, but the player revealed there had been interest in him from a number of clubs, including teams in League One and Two.

He says he can't wait to prove himself in the Football League, adding: "It's going to be my first proper stint in the Football League and I can't wait

to get started.

"I am a centre forward and I want to score goals. I want to help Port Vale get back into League One or at least end this season up that way. Hopefully I can impress the fans and crack on."

Meanwhile The New Saints completed their Champions League preparations with a tough workout in their behind closed doors friendly away to Rangers.

It provided a stern test for the Saints against the Glasgow club who ran out 3-1 winners under the new management of former England and Liverpool legend Steven Gerrard.

■ Tickets for the Saints' Champions League home tie against Macedonians KF Shkendija are on sale at the club. The second leg of the first qualifying round match will be played at Park Hall on Tuesday, July 17, with a 7pm kick off.

Sport

Cycling
Double delight in
Paragon race – P39

Cricket
Oswestry ace no
ordinary Joe – P39



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Cricketers want more of the same

OSWESTRY'S cricketers embark on the second half of the Birmingham League division one season with a spring in their step when they entertain Himley on Saturday (12noon).

The Morda Road men are in fine fettle, with three wins and a winning draw in their last five outings taking them up to fifth position at the midway point.

They are on the same amount of points as Bridgnorth who they defeated by five wickets last weekend, courtesy of a fine unbeaten century (103) from opening bat Joe Carrasco.

Next in their sights are Staffordshire visitors Himley, who themselves arrive in confident mood after their 10-wicket hammering of Kidderminster.

It has been quite a turnaround for the young Oswestry side after spending much of the early season in the bottom three following their promotion.

"It has taken a while to adapt, but we have made good progress in recent weeks," said chairman Chris Wiseman.

"We would certainly have settled for this position at the beginning of May, but there is still a long way to go. The league is very tight and we cannot be complacent."

Stand-in captain Dean Suter added: "The boys are really buzzing at the moment, and there is terrific spirit in the side."

"We now have two home games on the trot, and go into them full of confidence."

There remains an injury doubt over skipper Robbie Clarke, who has been struggling with a leg injury.

■ After failing to fulfil five fixtures this season, Oswestry's third team have been expelled from the Shropshire League division four.

It is a disappointing outcome for Morda Road club who have been fielding four teams for a number of seasons.

The club will continue to field two sides on Saturdays, and one on Sunday, while they may enter the Shrewsbury T20 midweek league next season.

Eagles staying put despite restructure

IT'S as you were for Oswestry's rugby players who will be playing at the same level next season despite a major restructuring of the northern leagues.

The Eagles will remain in the South Lancs and Cheshire Two, a level eight standard, and avoided being pushed up to a league which would have seen them face the prospect of playing higher rated sides every week.

The club had been pondering a return to the Midlands League - but that would have resulted in them playing as low as Midlands Four West North, a level nine standard. However, the club will be staying in their current level, much to the relief of its officials and players.

Oswestry, meanwhile, are holding a pre-season 10s tournament on Sunday, August 5 (11.30am) which is open to all ages and abilities.

Graham Edwards Memorial Trophy back

A POPULAR long-running football tournament based in Gobowen - the Graham Edwards Memorial Trophy - kicks off its 44th anniversary season this Saturday.

After an enforced break last year due to a shortage of teams, the tournament is back in business this summer.

There are eight teams, which have been split into two groups of four, from which the top two in each will go through to the semi-finals. All matches take place on the Gobowen playing field.

St Martins Village take on Kinnerley in the first match on Saturday in Group A with a noon kick off, and The New Saints under-19s meet Llangollen reserves in the other Group A fixture later that day at 4pm.

FOOTBALL by John Bridgwater

The first action in Group B takes place the following Tuesday (July 17) when St Martins tackle Guilsfield reserves (6.30).

Gobowen Celtic come face to face with Llanfyllin Town on the Wednesday, also with a 6.30pm kick off, in the other group game.

The tournament is named in memory of a promising young footballer from Gobowen, who played for both Gobowen and Weston Rhyn, who

died of leukaemia aged just 21 in 1974.

The event was set up the following year, and since then it has gone from strength to strength in becoming one of the longest charity competitions of its kind. Over the years, more than £125,000 has been raised for Leukaemia Research.

There will be an additional fundraising event later in the year on October 14 when former Liverpool defender and hardman Neil "Razor" Ruddock will be the guest speaker at the Graham Edwards Memorial Trophy annual dinner.

For further information contact competition secretary Richard Hardy on 07922-427302 or tournament press officer David Figg on 07719-

SAINTS SUFFER EURO DEFEAT

FOOTBALL by John Bridgwater

THE New Saints look to be heading for an early UEFA Champions League exit after crashing to a 5-0 defeat at the hands of Shkendija in the first qualifying round in Skopje.

A superb four-goal blast from Besart Ibrahim stunned the Welsh Premier champions as the Macedonians showed their class in the first leg in front of their vociferous fans at the national stadium.

Izair Emini put Shkendija on course with a 14th minute opener, before Ibrahim struck four times with some spectacular finishing to leave the Saints with a seemingly forlorn task in next Tuesday's return leg at Park Hall (7pm).

It was a night to forget for TNS and, although their Champions League hopes seem to be over for this season, manager Scott Ruscoe will be looking to get some pride back next week.

The impressive Macedonians appear virtually assured of a place in the second qualifying round where they will meet either Georgian champions FC Torpedo Kutaisi or Moldova high fliers FC Sheriff Tiraspol. In their first leg at home, Kutaisi notched a 2-1 advantage.

But TNS do have the consolation of playing in the Europa League with a meeting against Gibraltar champions Lincoln Red Imps later this month.

"We will give it a good go on Tuesday, and will want to get some pride back as we've got the Europa League to play towards," said a disappointed Ruscoe.

"We weren't good enough on the night. We gifted them the first two goals and were beaten by the better team."

Shkendija were soon on the front foot with some lively forays, and struck first blood on 14 minutes when Emini fired home from six yards after latching onto a deflected cross from the left.

Frankton looking to hit back



Howzat? Frankton batsman Richard Parry-Jones survives a strong appeal for lbw

FRANKTON will be chasing much needed points at home to Sentinel on Saturday (1pm) as they bid to lift the basement clouds in the Shropshire League premier division.

They slipped into the drop zone after last weekend's tense two wicket loss away to Bomere Heath.

The Macedonians were full of energy as they attacked at pace, while the normally assured Saints struggled to get into their stride in a nervy opening

With defender Ben Cabango and midfielder Danny Redmond making their competitive debuts, they fell further behind seven minutes before half time when Ibrahim turned outside the box before crashing a low strike past keeper Paul Harrison.

Ryan Brobbel went closest to the Saints a min-

ute after the break when his shot was deflected wide, but the visitors' hopes faded further as Ibrahim took centre stage with some stunning strikes.

He fired his second eight minutes after the interval with a crisp strike from the right, before bringing up his hat-trick with a fierce free kick on the hour.

The impressive striker made it 5-0 with his fourth of the game when he rifled another shot into the net from distance on 66 minutes.

Atherton in second but leads way

RACHEL Atherton is the new leader in the UCI Mountain Bike World series despite finishing an agonising second in the latest round in Val di Sole in Italy, writes JOHN BRIDGWATER.

It was a tough start for the 30-year-old who suffered a couple of crashes in her practice runs, the result of which saw her qualify for the women's elite race in sixth spot.

But the Llanrhaeadr downhill ace underlined her credentials with a storming ride to move up the standings, but just missed out on victory by 0.1 seconds from fellow Brit Tahnee Seagrave.

However, second place was enough for Atherton to take over the overall leaderboard from the previous front runner Myriam Nicole as she bids to reclaim the world crown she relinquished last year due to injury.

Gears up

With four rounds remaining, Atherton is well placed as she gears up for this weekend's fifth round in Vallnord, Andorra.

Now with 776 points, she is 100 clear of Seagrave (676pts), while French rider Nicole lies third on 610 points.

Representing Trek Factory Racing, she is now recapturing the form that made her five times downhill world champion.

In the men's elite race, Atherton's brother Gee, who was carrying an injury, finished in 26th position in 4:26.54 - over 10 seconds off the pace. Gee is 23rd in the overall standings.

Oswestry's tennis men net promotion

OSWESTRY Tennis Club's men's first team sealed promotion to the Shropshire League division two next season after sweeping aside local rivals Cridfins 4-0 in their final fixture of the season.

With their regular squad of captain Martin Shortt and Oliver Tombs as first pair, and Matt Grice and Gary Edwards as second pair, the team won all four rubbers in straight sets.

Shortt and Tombs won 6-2, 6-0 and 6-1, 6-1 and Grice and Edwards prevailed 6-3, 7-5 and 6-3, 6-1 to ensure the team went all season unbeaten.

The ladies first team of captain Jo Macrae, Kat Oakley, Rebecca Holywell and Fiona Russell drew 2-2 in their rearranged fixture at Cound in the women's doubles premier division.

Meanwhile, the ladies thirds moved to second in division 5N with a 4-0 win at Shrewsbury courtesy of excellent displays from the pairs of Jo Dalietos and Carolyn Yates and Amanda Coxhead and Emily Lowe.

The team are three points behind the current leaders Hinstock with a game in hand, with Wollerton their next opponents.

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